NATION
Declare floods nat'l calamity: Naidu to Centre
≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS
World Bank ups India growth forecast to 7%
≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS
B'desh makes history, secures test series
≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in www.magzter.com 4 SEPTEMBER 2024 | WEDNESDAY | BENGALURU | 29 SAFAR, 1446 AH Vol 4 | Issue No 223| Pages: 8

WE ARE HIRING
REPORTERS
WEB-EDITOR
SUB-EDITOR
Journalism degree preferred but not essential.
Reporter: 5-6 years experience.
Web-editor: 2-4 years experience.
Sub editors freshers welcome.
SEND YOUR CV TO:
hr.salarnews@gmail.com
anushreeirwin@gmail.com

K'taka declares dengue an epidemic after 25K cases

Citizens can be penalised for failing to stop mosquito breeding

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka government has notified dengue as an 'epidemic disease' and introduced regulations, which allow authorities to penalise those who disobey its orders or fail to take measures to stop breeding of mosquitoes.

The government has also introduced amendments to the Karnataka Epidemic Diseases Regulation, 2020, mandating people to be more responsible in containing the spread of the vector-borne disease.

The amendment proposes penalties in three categories – household, commercial and active construction areas.

For households in urban and rural areas, the penalty would be Rs 400 and Rs 200 respectively.

In commercial areas, the penalty would be Rs 1,000 in urban regions and Rs 500 in the rural neighbourhoods.

Owners of active construction areas which provide space for mosquitoes to breed will be fined Rs 2,000 in urban localities and Rs 1,000 in rural ones.

The amendment proposes penalties in household, commercial and active construction areas **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

- The regulations make it mandatory for owners and occupiers of the household buildings to take necessary measures to prevent breeding of mosquitoes.

The regulations make it mandatory for owners and occupiers of the household buildings to take necessary measures to prevent breeding of mosquitoes.

"They should ensure to cover or secure the water storage containers, sumps or overhead tanks with a lid or any material to prevent mosquito breeding. They should also dispose of solid waste material to prevent water accumulation and mosquito breeding," according to the notification.

Empty vessels, pot saucers, cans, containers, unused tyres, parts or any other solid waste materials should not be kept in such a manner that they are likely to collect and retain water which may cause breeding of mosquitoes, it was stated.

Every person, institution or agency should take care to prevent collection or accumulation of water, inside or outside the premises, so as to prevent nuisance to the neighbours or the community as a source for mosquito breeding, the regulations read.

The competent authority will be empowered to enter, inspect the premises, issue directions, levy penalties and implement all remedial measures and guidelines prescribed from time to time by the Health and Family welfare department of the state to curb the spread of the vector-borne diseases. —*PTI*

BJP CALLS IT DIVERSION

Bengal Assembly passes anti-rape bill, CM flays PM

CM Mamata Banerjee speaks after tabling the bill during a session of the state Legislative Assembly, in Kolkata, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

KOLKATA, 3 SEPT

West Bengal Assembly on Tuesday unanimously passed the state anti-rape Bill that seeks capital punishment for rape convicts if their actions result in the victim's death or leave her in a vegetative state and life sentence without parole for other perpetrators.

Other significant features of the proposed 'Aparajita Woman and Child Bill (West Bengal Criminal Laws and Amendment) Bill 2024' include the completion of probes into rape cases within 21 days of the initial report, and a special task force where women officers will lead investigations.

The proposed law, which requires assent from the Bengal Governor and then the President, when enacted, would mark a significant development in the state's legal framework against sexual crimes.

Speaking during the discussion, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee termed the proposed legislation as "historic" and demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and the chief ministers of all states that have "not been able to implement effective legislations to safeguard women". According to the Bill, any fine imposed shall be "fair and reasonable" to meet the medical expenses and rehabilitation of the victim or their next of kin, if applicable, as may be determined by the Special Court and should be paid within the period fixed by it. The bill was passed after the alleged rape and murder of a post-graduate trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Hospital on 9 August. The Bill was passed after the Opposition BJP MLAs lent their support to it even as Suvendu Adhikari allegated that Banerjee moved the Bill to "divert attention from public anger and protests". —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

3 missing as Coast Guard chopper crashes into sea

PORBANDAR, 3 SEPT

Three crew members went missing after an Indian Coast Guard (ICG) helicopter on a rescue mission crashed into the Arabian Sea off Porbandar coast in Gujarat, officials said on Tuesday. The incident occurred on Monday night after the agency launched an operation around 11 pm to evacuate an injured crew member on board a tanker which was sailing close to Porbandar, the ICG said in a statement. While one of the four crew members on board the ICG's advanced light helicopter (ALH) was rescued, a search operation was on for three others, it said. —*PTI*

6 boys among 7 held for raping girl in Chhattisgarh

AMBIKAPUR, 3 SEPT

A 13-year-old girl was allegedly raped by seven persons, including six boys, in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur district, police said on Tuesday. Police detained all the seven accused. Barring a 19-year-old, the others are minors (aged between 15 and 17 years), a police officer said, adding that one of them was known to the victim. The incident occurred on Sunday night in the Pathalgaon police station area when the victim, a resident of a nearby village in Surguja, was returning home after visiting a market with her friends when the incident took place. —*PTI*

Former president of Atlas Cycles dies by suicide in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Former president of Atlas Cycles Salil Kapoor allegedly shot himself dead at his home in Lutyens Delhi area on Tuesday, police officials said. Kapoor's body was found in a pool of blood near the puja room of his house on the Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Road around 1 pm by his manager, they said. According to a police officer, Kapoor shot in his head with a licensed revolver. In a note recovered from the spot, the former president of Atlas Cycles purportedly mentioned a "financial burden" on him, he said. His wife and three children were staying separately, the police officer said. His sister-in-law Natasha Kapoor also hanged herself to death in the same house in January 2020. —*PTI*

Student, mistaken for cow smuggler, shot dead

FARIDABAD, 3 SEPT

A class 12 student was allegedly chased in a car and shot dead here on 23 August by a group of five suspected cow vigilantes who claimed they mistook the boy for a cattle smuggler, police sources said on Tuesday.

All the five accused -- Saurabh, Anil Kaushik, Varun, Krishna and Adesh -- were arrested on 28 August and remanded in police custody for two days, Superintendent of Police (Crime) Aman Yadav said in a statement released on Tuesday.

During interrogation, the accused claimed that on the night of 23 August, they had received information that some suspected cattle smugglers driving two SUVs were doing recce in the city.

They mistook the victim, Aryan Mishra, and his friends, Shanky and Harshit, for cattle smugglers and followed their car for about 30 kilometres near the Gadhpuri toll on the Delhi-Agra National Highway.

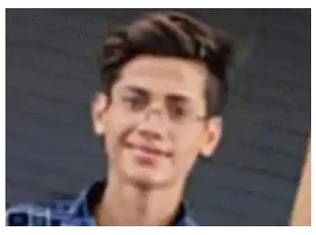


PHOTO: PTI

- The accused chased the victim's car for nearly 30 km on 23 August.

The accused told the police that when they asked the boy and his friends to stop their car, the driver accelerated, following which they opened fire and Mishra was killed on the spot near the Gadhpuri toll in Palwal, they said.

The victim's father claimed that one of the acquaintances who had accompanied his son was part of a conspiracy to get him killed. —*PTI*

MODI IN BRUNEI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said he was looking forward to strong ties with Brunei, as he arrived here to strengthen cooperation in defence, trade and investment, energy sectors. Modi interacted with the Indian diaspora and was received by Minister of Religious Affairs Pehin Dato Ustaz Awang Badaruddin **PHOTO: PTI** >>>More on Page 3

Centre drags WB to SC over no support to CISF

The Centre on Tuesday moved the Supreme Court alleging "unpardonable" non-cooperation by the West Bengal government in providing logistical support to the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), tasked with providing security at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, where a trainee doctor was raped and murdered. Terming the alleged non-cooperation of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) government as an example "symptomatic of a systemic malaise", the Union Ministry of Home Affairs has sought a direction to West Bengal authorities to extend full cooperation to the CISF. On 20 August, the Apex Court issued a slew of directions including setting up of a 10-member National Task Force (NTF) to formulate a protocol for ensuring the safety and security of doctors and other health care professionals. It had taken a serious note of mob violence at the hospital and the allegation that the Kolkata police fled the scene. It had ordered deployment of CISF personnel at the hospital to enable the striking doctors to resume work. —*PTI*

Defence Ministry approves proposal worth ₹1.46L crore

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

The Defence Ministry on Tuesday approved the procurement of future-ready combat vehicles (FRCVs) worth Rs 1,44,716 crore for modernisation of the Army's tank fleet and air defence fire control radars, among other proposals.

The proposals were cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The DAC "accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for 10 capital acquisition proposals," the ministry said in a statement.

Of the total cost of the AoNs, 99 per cent is from indigenous sources under the "Buy (Indian)" and "Buy (lndian-Indigenously Designed Developed and Manufactured)" categories, it added. The FRCVs will be futuristic main battle tanks with superior mobility, all-terrain ability, multi-layered protections, precision and lethal fires and real-time situational awareness. An AoN was also accorded for the procurement of air defence fire control radars, which will detect and track aerial targets and provide firing solutions.

The proposal has also been approved for Forward Repair Team (Tracked), which has suitable cross-country mobility for carrying out in-situ repair during mechanised operations. This equipment is designed and developed by Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited, and is authorised for both mechanised Infantry Battalion and Armoured Regiment.

Rajnath Singh **PHOTO: PTI**

Three AoNs have been accorded to enhance the capabilities of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG). The procurement of the Dornier-228 aircraft, next-generation fast patrol vessels having high operational features in rough weather conditions and next-generation offshore patrol vessels with advanced technology and enhanced long-range operations will enhance the capability of the ICG to carry out surveillance, patrolling of maritime zones, search-and-rescue and disaster-relief operations. —*PTI*

9 NAXALITES KILLED IN CHHATTISGARH

DANTEWADA, 3 SEPT

Nine Naxalites, including six women, were killed in a fierce encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region on Tuesday, a top police official said, in the latest offensive against Maoists which has gathered pace after a change of government last year. The gunfight broke out at around 10.30 am in forests along the border of Dantewada and Bijapur districts.

After the guns fell silent, bodies of nine Naxalites were recovered from the spot. A cache of weapons, including one SLR (Self-Loading Rifle), one 303 rifle, 12 bore rifle, 315 bore rifle, and explosives materials were also recovered. —*PTI*

REELS ON GRUHA LAKSHMI TO GET PRIZES

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka's Women and Child Welfare Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar introduced a reward scheme to celebrate the success of the Gruha Lakshmi scheme. The initiative encourages beneficiaries to create social media reels highlighting the scheme's positive impact on their lives. This new campaign is part of the State government's effort to mark the first anniversary of the Gruha Lakshmi scheme. The competition is open to all Gruha Lakshmi beneficiaries, who are encouraged to share their experiences on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram. Hebbalkar emphasised that the reels with the most views will receive a prize. —*Salar News*

RANJITH MOVES HC

Pauly booked for rape, actor denies charge

KOCHI, 3 SEPT

Actor Nivin Pauly was on Tuesday booked for rape after a 40-year-old woman complained that he sexually assaulted her a year ago in Dubai, police said.

An officer of Oonnukal police station said that there are six accused, including a woman, in the case.

The first accused is a woman and Pauly is the sixth accused, the officer said.

However, Pauly denied the allegations against him. "I have come across a false news report accusing me of abusing a girl. Please know that this is entirely untrue. I'm determined to go to any extent to prove these allegations are baseless and will take all necessary steps to bring those responsible to light," he said

Nivin Pauly **PHOTO: X/@NIVINOFFICIAL**

Actor Sidhique and director Ranjith, the first two to face allegations of sexual offences against female actors in the wake of the Justice K Hema Committee report, have moved the Kerala High Court seeking protection from arrest in the cases lodged against them.

Ranjith Balakrishnan has claimed in his anticipatory bail plea that the case against him was the result of the "disappointment and resentment of the complainant at not being chosen to act in the movie being re-ignited by certain vested interests" who wanted him to be removed from the chairmanship of the Kerala Chalachitra Academy.

The 60-year-old director has also claimed that he suffers from several ailments and recently underwent liver transplantation surgery, and therefore, requires good and proper medical care and attention.

Sidhique, who was booked for offences under sections 376 (rape) and 506 (criminal intimidation), has claimed that the complainant female actor, has subjected him to the "prolonged campaign of harassment and false accusations since 2019". In his anticipatory bail plea, he further claimed that she had repeatedly, for the past five years, made unsubstantiated and false claims of sexual misbehaviour and 'verbal sexual offers' by him in a theatre in 2016. —*PTI*

1 dead, 4 injured as car plunges off City flyover

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

One killed and four injured after a speeding car collided with bike and plunged off from the Yeshwanthpur flyover on Tuesday. Police said that the vehicle's number plate was Telangana. According to the report the car was traveling from Sankey Road via Tumkur Road and the accident took place around 3.45am. The car lost control after ramming into a bike at the top of the flyover. Fortunately, there were no vehicles passing under the flyover at the time of the accident. The car was severely damaged upon impact. The accident left three occupants of the car and two people on the bike with serious injuries. *—Salar News*

Udupi medical student held for assault, coercion

UDUPI, 3 SEPT

A medical student was arrested for allegedly assaulting a fellow student as well as forcing her to convert to Islam, Udupi police said. According to an anonymous complaint received at Manipal Police Station, Mohammad Danish Khan, 27, had gotten friendly with a co-student from the Hindu community. He had allegedly invited her home on 11 March and assaulted her. The complainant also claimed that Khan had asked her to convert to Islam and intimidated her with direct consequences if she did not comply. The woman said ever since, until 28 August when she decided to lodge a police complaint, she had been getting calls from Khan asking her to convert to Islam. Khan has been pursuing medical education. He was arrested on Monday and was produced before magistrate, who sent him to judicial custody. *—PTI*

Accord top priority to reprocess e-waste: Khandre

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka Forest and Environment Minister B Eshwar Khandre said on Tuesday there is a dire need to adopt the practices of regeneration of solid waste, which is posing a grave threat to nature. Speaking at the 5th Re-Commerce Expo, being held till 5 September, he said the need of the hour is to give top priority to regenerate and reprocess e-waste, batteries, and other electronic goods. "This will not only be economically viable but also environmentally friendly," Khandre added. According to the Minister, the collapse of hills and earth sinking at Shirur in the state and Wayanad in Kerala were a warning for us. He emphasised the need to blend the development and production process without damaging ecology and environment. "There are huge opportunities for the younger generation to work on this subject," he added. *—PTI*

HC refuses to quash molestation charges against astrologer

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka High Court has declined to quash the criminal proceedings against an astrologer and a woman's husband in a case involving her alleged molestation. The court rejected the petitions filed by Deepa Darshan HP (husband) and Mohandas alias Shivaramu (astrologer), who sought quashing of the charges against them under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The case centres on accusations that the astrologer, under the guise of performing a puja to "correct" the woman's 'kundali' (horoscope), inappropriately touched her. The woman's husband, who had brought her to the astrologer, is accused of threatening her not to disclose the incident. The husband argued that a prior complaint had been filed against him in 2018 under Section 498A of the IPC and that the current complaint, filed in 2019, was impermissible as it related to similar allegations. *—PTI*

TN WILL GAIN MORE FROM MEKEDATU DAM, SAYS DKS

DKS says K'taka will respect court's verdict on Mekadatu project

CHENNAI, 3 SEPT

Stating that a favourable monsoon system this time has been a solace to both Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday claimed that Tamil Nadu stood to gain from the Mekedatu dam project in his state.

Referring to the copious inflows into the Cauvery River, which led to the neighbouring state release the surplus water to Tamil Nadu, he told reporters that Mekedatu balancing reservoir project would benefit Tamil Nadu more than Karnataka.

The Deputy CM, who later held a detailed meeting with Chennai Mayor R Priya and senior officials of Greater Chennai Corporation during his visit, told reporters that Karnataka hoped to get relief from the court on dam project.

Shivakumar was on a visit to Chennai with a team of over 15 officials to inspect the solid waste management and see how compressed natural gas (CNG) is produced here.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar during a visit to various projects of Greater Chennai Corporation, in Chennai, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

But he said, "we are a big government. ....social media is taking a very big role apart from the regular media. It is quite natural we have to promote government policies. It is not a big issue. Political parties spend such an amount. Being a party president, I know how much we spend from the party," he said.

Karnataka, he said, will respect the court verdict on the Mekedatu project.

Asked about an RTI reply stating that Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's office spends nearly Rs 54 lakh per month to maintain his official and personal social media accounts, Shivakumar initially replied, "I don't want to comment about it."

In a series of posts on the social media platform 'X', he said the team visited Mahashakti Bio-Enercon's Biogas manufacturing and supply facility in Madhavaram to understand its operational model and effectiveness.

In another post, Shivakumar said, "in our constant endeavour to step up efforts for effective solid waste disposal and management as part of our #BrandBengaluru vision, visited Urbraser company office and met the officials." *—PTI*

'SACRIFICIAL LAMB'

BJP flays Cong for firing ex-MUDA commissioner

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

BJP in Karnataka on Tuesday slammed Congress government over the suspension of former Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) Commissioner GT Dinesh Kumar describing him a "sacrificial lamb".

An internal inquiry was conducted by the state government into the functioning of MUDA following reports of large scale irregularities. Kumar has been accused of taking several illegal measures while serving as the MUDA commissioner and, accordingly, he was suspended, a government order said.

BJP State President BY Vijayendra said Siddaramaiah-led government has found a scapegoat in Dinesh Kumar.

"Not surprising to see @ inckarnataka govt still being stubborn & protecting itself by making former MUDA commissioner, a sacrificial lamb,

PHOTO: PTI

> **Opposition have lied and they are worried about it not proving it as true. I have never lied and have not committed any wrong, so I'm not worried or tenseds**
>
> -Siddaramaiah, K'taka Chief Minister

Kumar is "just a small fish in this whole corruption scandal. There are bigger, corrupt sharks, who are deeply involved & only a thorough CBI Investigation can unravel the whole truth!", he said. He demanded that Siddaramaiah must resign. *—PTI*

POTHOLE FILLING EXERCISE

BBMP workers fill potholes near SBM Circle, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. This comes after Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday set 15-day deadline for BBMP to fix all the potholes **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Cong leaders meet Guv, seek disqualification of BJP MLC

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

State Congress called for the disqualification of Chhalavadi Narayanaswamy, the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council. On Tuesday, Saleem Ahmed, the Chief Whip of the Legislative Council, along with a delegation of current and former Congress members, met with Governor Thawarchand Gehlot to submit a formal request for Narayanaswamy's disqualification.

Congress's move follows allegations levelled by BJP MP Lahar Singh against party president Mallikarjun Kharge's family, accusing them of receiving land illegally. In response, Congress leaders have accused Narayanaswamy of misusing land originally allocated for a school and subsequently repurposed for commercial use. According to Congress, the land is now home to a biryani hotel

The controversy dates back to Narayanaswamy's tenure with the Karnataka Housing Board (KHB) from November 2002 to May 2005. During this

Members of Congress Party Legislative Council met Governor Thawarchand Gehlot and submitted a petition, in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

period, Narayanaswamy allegedly used his political influence to acquire 25,841 square feet of Civic Amenities (CA) land in Hoskote for a school, paying Rs 12.27 lakh for the plot. However, instead of building a school, the land was reportedly repurposed for telecommunications and public service and is now used for commercial purposes.

Saleem condemned Narayanaswamy's actions, stating that the land's original purpose was to serve educational needs, and the subsequent use for telecommunications and then a commercial establishment was a clear violation of KHB regulations.

Congress has further accused Narayanaswamy of similar misconduct in securing an industrial plot in Hebbal, Mysuru and has called for legal action under Sections 316 and 318 of the Indian Penal Code for cheating and breach of trust. *—Salar News*

State to have Global Capability policy by Tech Summit 2024

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka Minister for IT/BT Priyank Kharge on Monday promised to expedite the drafting of the global capability centres policy and release it by the time Bengaluru Tech Summit 2024 is held in November this year.

Kharge was addressing the Global Innovation Alliance (GIA) meet organised by the Department of IT/BT to promote the Tech Summit among its partner countries and international trade mission representatives.

According to him, this is a win-win situation for all stakeholders concerned, because by fostering global collaborations they not only learn from each other's ecosystem, but they also create new markets for technologies.

This year, the theme of BTS will be 'Breaking Boundaries' and the event will feature a range of activities including a six-track conference covering IT & Deep Tech, Startup Ecosystem, Global Innovation Alliance and India-USA Tech Conclave among others.*—PTI*

Seminar on fake news and its social impact held in City

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka Media Academy, in collaboration with the Department of Information and Publicity, organised a seminar titled 'Misinformation: How it Affects Social Justice' at the Karnataka Gandhi Smaraka Nidhi, Sheshadripuram, on Tuesday.

The event drew media professionals, journalism students, and esteemed dignitaries, addressing the rising concern of fake news and its implications on social justice.

The seminar was inaugurated by Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, who emphasised the dangers of organised misinformation in today's world. "There is an organised spread of misinformation in the present scenario. Earlier, misinformation was used for propaganda, but now it plays with people's minds, becoming more dangerous and impacting society." he stated.

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao with students during the seminar, held at Gandhi Bhavan in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Karnataka Media Academy Chairperson Ayesha Khanum expressed her gratitude for the enthusiasm shown by the media fraternity and students alike. Prof. BK Ravi, Chancellor of Koppal University, underscored the importance of truth in journalism. "Society respects journalists because they expect truth from them. Staying on the path of truth is crucial for maintaining this trust," he said.

A panel discussion on the topic followed. The panel included veteran journalists such as Dinesh Amin Matto, former advisor to the Chief Minister, M Siddaraju, former Chairman of the Karnataka Media Academy, Asha Krishnaswamy, and Ravindra Bhat Ainakayee, Editor of Prajavani. *—Salar News*

'4k-page chargesheet against Darshan will be filed soon'

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

In a significant development, City Police Commissioner B Dayananda said that chargesheet into the murder of fan of Kannada actor Darshan and his partner Pavithra Gowda and 15 other accused in the case is ready to be submitted to the court.

Addressing the media on Tuesday the top cop said, "The investigation in the case has been completed and the chargesheet is ready. The chargesheet has been handed over to the public prosecutor and we have taken suggestions from the learned counsel. After going ahead with the corrections and changes the charge sheet will be submitted to the court in a day or two".

"Few reports are expected from the FSL in Hyderabad. We plan to add the contents of the awaited reports to the charge sheet in the next few days. As a first move we are in the process of submitting a preliminary charge sheet" he said.

PHOTO: PTI

> **Victims' family can expect justice, we will get them justice. We will fight in the court for justice**
>
> -G Parameshwara, Karnataka Home Minister

Officials familiar with the investigations said that the charge sheet runs into 4,500 pages and has 250 pieces of evidence against Darshan and others. There is a possibility of Darshan being presented as the prime accused in the case instead of his partner Pavithra Gowda. *—Salar News*

KSRTC TO GET 1500 BUSES AHEAD OF GANESHA FESTIVAL

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) on Monday said it has made elaborate arrangements for operating extra 1,500 buses from Bengaluru to various places in addition to the existing schedules to provide transport facilities to people from 5 to 7 September, ahead of Gowri and Ganesha festival.

Later, special buses will be operated intra- and-inter-state-to-Bengaluru on September 8. A discount of five per cent on the fare will be extended if four or more passengers book tickets in a single ticket. A discount of 10 per cent is offered on the return journey ticket if onward and return journey tickets are booked simultaneously.

On 8 September, KSRTC will also operate special buses returning to Bengaluru to accommodate post-festival travel.

—Salar News with Agencies

PLASTIC FREE INITIATIVE

Smoking, alcohol banned in Chamundi Hills

MYSURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday said smoking, drinking alcohol or consuming 'gutka' and 'paan' will be completely prohibited on Chamundi Hills, which will also be made plastic-free.

He also asked officials to prepare a master plan for development of Chamundi Hills over the next five years.

"Smoking, drinking alcohol or consuming gutka and paan on Chamundi Hills have been completely prohibited. We had decided to make Chamundi hill plastic free," Siddaramaiah said after chairing the first meeting of the Chamundeshwari Kshetra Development Authority here.

Mobile phones & photography are also banned in the temple **PHOTO: PTI**

Speaking to reporters, he said additional funds of Rs 11 crore will be released from the Authority to implement the union government's Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) scheme here, and five temples will be renovated.

"Inside the temple (on the Chamundi Hills) photography will be prohibited and mobile phones should be switched off... making Chamundi Hills more attractive and providing all facilities and amenities is the aim," he said.

He added, however, that there will be no dress code, and all people, irrespective of caste, religion and sex, are welcome to the temple.

Siddaramaiah said some developmental work have been completed while others are still pending completion and they have to be completed immediately.

Siddaramaiah said in coordination with the police department, the temple authorities will install CCTV cameras at various spots where it is necessary. *—PTI*

Probe woman's death who accused BSY of rape: Panel

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Karnataka State Women's Commission called for a police probe into the death of a woman who accused former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa of sexually abusing her minor daughter. The panel has also sought a report from the Bengaluru Police amid suspicions over the death and burial of the woman.

Nagalakshmi Choudhary, Chairperson of the Women's Commission, wrote to Bengaluru City Police Commissioner B Dayananda on 27 August, seeking a detailed report on the woman's death at Nano Hospitals in Bengaluru. However, as of Tuesday, the Commissioner has denied receiving any such communication from the Commission.

The woman, who had been suffering from advanced lung cancer, died on 26 May at the private hospital located within the Hulimavu police station limits. Despite her terminal illness, the lack of a post-mortem has sparked suspicions about the exact cause of her death.

The deceased woman had filed a complaint against Yediyurappa on 14 March, accusing him of sexually assaulting her 17-year-old daughter at his residence in Dollars Colony in February.

—Salar News

PHOTO: ANI

CAG detects lapses in PM-KISAN scheme in Assam

GUWAHATI, 3 SEPT

Implementation of the Centre's flagship 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi' (PM-KISAN) scheme in Assam has been plagued by problems, ranging from 35 per cent of the applicants being found ineligible to the recovery of a mere 0.24 per cent of funds released to these non-entitled beneficiaries, as detected by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). A performance audit of the scheme from December 2018 to March 2021 found that out of the 41,87,023 applications from the state, 10,66,593 were rejected by PM-KISAN portal and Public Financial Management System. A mere 0.24 per cent of the funds released to these ineligible beneficiaries were received back till October 2021, which was not refunded to the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, the CAG report, tabled. *—PTI*

M'rashtra gets Indore-Manmad line worth ₹18K cr

INDORE, 3 SEPT

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Monday approved the 309-km project estimated to cost Rs 18,036 crore. The line, which will connect Indore, the financial capital of Madhya Pradesh, with Manmad in north Maharashtra has got the green signal ahead of the coming Maharashtra Assembly elections. The new Indore-Manmad railway line project will make it possible to transport goods from far-away border areas adjacent to Nepal to Mumbai's Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Tuesday said. It will provide a boost to economic development, manufacturing, religious tourism and cultural activities and prove to be a "win-win" project for the whole country, he added. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav thanked prime minister Modi for approving the project and said it will accelerate pace of development in Malwa-Nimar region of State. *—PTI*

Delhi govt slams Guv over hiring of social media mgmt

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj on Tuesday alleged that Lt Governor VK Saxena is hiring a company for social media management, calling it "unconstitutional". The important point is that the estimated amount on social media spending is Rs 1.5 crore annually," Bharadwaj said. There was no immediate response from the LG office. Bharadwaj argued that this is "unconstitutional" and "against the principles of democracy". "The BJP is running their own narrative since it is a political party and we also run our narrative. *—PTI*

Modi arrives in Brunei on first leg of 2-nation visit

Modi becomes the first Indian PM to visit the nation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a visit to Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque, in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 3 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said he was looking forward to strong ties with Brunei, especially in boosting commercial and cultural linkages, as he arrived here on the first leg of his two-nation trip.

Modi, who is the first Indian Prime Minister to travel to Brunei on a bilateral visit, said he was looking forward to his meetings with Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah and other members.

"I thank Crown Prince His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah for welcoming me at the airport," Modi said in a post on X. As a special gesture, Modi was received by Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah at the airport. He was accorded a warm welcome and given a guard of honour at the airport.

"This visit is special as it is the first ever bilateral visit by an Indian PM and is taking place as the two countries are celebrating 40 years of the establishment of diplomatic ties this year," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

Modi inaugurated the new chancery premises of the Indian High Commission in Brunei. Modi expressed confidence in advancing India's historical ties with Brunei Darussalam and deepening its strategic partnership with Singapore during his three-day visit to the two countries.

Brunei is an important partner in India's 'Act East' Policy and Indo-Pacific Vision. India and Brunei enjoy a friendly relationship which is marked by mutual respect and understanding on bilateral and multilateral issues.

He will also visit an iconic mosque built by the father of the present Sultan. On Wednesday, Modi will hold bilateral talks with Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. From Brunei, Modi will travel to Singapore on Wednesday. *—PTI*

THE OPULENT SULTAN OF BRUNEI HASSANAL BOLKIAH

Narendra Modi is on a visit to Brunei till4 September, becoming the first Indian PM to do so. During his trip, Modi will meet Brunei's ruler, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, at the Istana Nurul Iman Palace.

- Hassanal has ruled Brunei since 1967. He is the 2nd longest-reigning monarch in the world after late Queen Elizabeth II.
- His palace is 2,00,000 sq m in area, which has 1,700 rooms, 257 bathrooms, 5 swimming pools, and 110 garages.
- He spends $20,000 per haircut and flies his barber from London.

Bolkiah owns over 7,000 vehicles (600 Rolls-Royce's, 531 Mercedes-Benz, 450 Ferraris, 380 Bentleys, 185 BMWs, 177 Jaguar, 160 Porches, 20 Lamborghini) valued at ₹41,500 crore

Owns gold-coated Rolls-Royce, one of only seven Ferrari 456 GT Venice in the world, a Boeing 747-400, Boeing 767-200, an Airbus A340-200, and 200 polo ponies.

Istana Nurul Iman Palace is the world's largest residential palace valued at ₹11,754 crore

₹2.88 L cr net worth

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi with party President Mallikarjun Kharge during Haryana assembly polls meet in New Delhi on Tuesday PHOTO:PTI

AAP-Cong alliance talks on in Haryana

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Congress on Tuesday said it is in talks with AAP for an alliance in Haryana but nothing has been finalised yet.

On whether Congress will field Vinesh Phogat in the upcoming Haryana Elections, AICC general secretary in-charge of state Deepak Babaria said, "You will get clarity by tomorrow." Earlier, AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh welcomed reports claiming Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has shown interest in the possibility of an alliance with Arvind Kejriwal-led party in poll-bound Haryana.

There were several reports claiming that Gandhi, in a meeting of Congress' Central Election Committee (CEC) on Monday, expressed interest about the possibility of alliance with AAP for assembly polls in Haryana.

Asked about the possibility of an alliance with AAP, Babaria said, "We are in talks with the Aam Aadmi Party, but nothing has been finalised yet. As soon as something is finalised, we will inform you."

Responding to another question, Babaria said, "We have to defeat the BJP and not allow votes to be divided." *—PTI*

Kharge, Rahul hold meeting with AICC Secretaries

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi held a meeting with All India Congress Committee (AICC) secretaries and joint secretaries here on Tuesday during which ways to strengthen the party organisation were discussed.

Kharge and Rahul met the leaders at the AICC headquarters and sought their feedback on strengthening the organisation and expanding the party's support base, sources said. The meeting comes days after a major organisational rejig under which the party appointed several new secretaries and joint secretaries while shuffling the states of some office bearers.

Kharge has appointed AICC secretaries and joint secretaries for various states and union territories. These office bearers are associated with the party's general secretaries and in-charges in the respective states. *—PTI*

Manipur CM calls drone attacks an act of terrorism

IMPHAL, 3 SEPT

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Tuesday condemned the drone bomb attacks on civilians as acts of terrorism and vowed a firm response.

Taking to X, Singh expressed his outrage, stating, "Dropping bombs on civilian populations and security forces using drones is an act of terrorism, and I condemn such cowardly acts in the strongest terms."

Singh's comments followed two separate drone bomb attacks in Koutruk and Senjam Chirang in Imphal West district, which resulted in the deaths of two persons, including a woman, and injuries to 12 others. "Manipur state government takes such unprovoked assaults with utmost seriousness and will respond decisively to combat these forms of terrorism targeting the indigenous population," Singh said.

The use of drones in these bomb attacks marks the first instance of "hi-tech weapons" being employed in the state.

"There was mobilisation of armed miscreants in many places which had seen intense conflict in the past. When the attack started in Koutruk, the IGP, DIG and SP and other police forces rushed to the area to counter the situation. Retaliatory firing and combing operations along with Army and central forces were conducted," a police statement said.

Meanwhile, the Manipur police have constituted a five-member "high-level committee" to examine the use of drones by militants.

The committee would be headed by Additional DGP (Intelligence) Ashutosh Kumar Sinha, and would also include Indian Army, Assam Rifles, CRPF and BSF officers, the statement added. *—PTI*

3 injured in drone attack in Manipur

IMPHAL, 3 SEP

Three people including a 23-year-old-woman were injured after suspected militants launched a fresh bomb attack using a drone in Manipur's Imphal West district, police said on Tuesday. "At least two explosives were dropped from a drone on Monday evening around 6.20 pm at a residential locality in which a woman and two others were injured. *—PTI.*

KOLKATA HORROR

Junior docs continue sit-in near Police HQ

Junior doctors carried a replica of spine & red roses as a symbol to accuse Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal of failing to secure justice for the rape and murder of RG Kar victim, in Kolkata on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

KOLKATA, 3 SEPT

Junior doctors of different medical colleges who took out a rally to Kolkata Police headquarters Lalbazar demanding the resignation of police commissioner Vineet Goyal, stayed put at nearby BB Ganguly street even on Tuesday, more than 23 hours after they were stopped from marching further. The doctors, who were joined by several common people as well as students from other educational institutions, spent the entire Monday night on BB Ganguly street, around half a kilometre away from Lalbazar, to stop them from marching ahead.

A huge contingent of Kolkata Police officers remained on guard on the other side of the barricade built with guardrails chained together and locked with padlocks.

Amid protests by civil society organisations over the rape-murder of a trainee doctor, Bengali theatre personality Biplab Bandyopadhyay on Tuesday announced returning the state-instituted 'Best Theatre Director' award over the RG Kar Hospital issue.

Former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hopsital, Dr. Sandip Ghosh, was sent to 8-day police custody. Ghosh is also suspended by the govt.

The next hearing of the case will be on 10 September. The Anti-Corruption Branch of the CBI arrested Dr. Sandip Ghosh, along with three others, over alleged corruption and financial misconduct at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital on Monday. *—PTI/ANI*

Cong questions ICICI's 'no salary paid' to Buch claim

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Congress on Tuesday questioned the ICICI Bank's assertion that it had not paid any salary or granted ESOPs to SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Buch after her retirement and asked that if the amount paid to her was her "retiral benefit", why was it non-uniform both in terms of its frequency and amount.

The Opposition party levelled fresh conflict-of-interest allegations against Buch on Monday and asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to come clean as the head of the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on appointment.

"Even if we were to assume that the Rs 5.03 crore she received from ICICI in 2014-2015 (soon after her superannuation) was part of her retiral benefit and that she got nothing in 2015-2016, why did this so called retiral benefit resume in 2016-2017 and continue until 2021?" he asked at a at AICC headquarters.

"Why hasn't the revised policy been made publicly available by the ICICI? Why was Ms Madhabi Buch allowed to exercise ESOPs at a time when the share price of this company increased substantially, thereby benefitting her? And strangely, this benefit that accrued to her coincided with her tenure at the SEBI. Wasn't the market price beneficial to her?" he asked.

Were the ESOPs given to Buch sourced from the Employees' ESOPs Trust, Khera asked. *—PTI*

Govt constitutes 23rd Law Commission

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

The government has notified the constitution of the 23rd Law Commission for a period of three years, with a provision to appoint serving Supreme Court and high court judges as its chairperson and members.

The panel advises the government on complex legal issues. Once it is constituted, the government initiates the process of appointing its chief and members. The term of the 22nd Law Commission ended on 31 August and the new panel has been constituted with effect from 1 September, according to a law ministry order issued late Monday.

Though the notification relating to the constitution of the 21st and 22nd law commissions, issued in September 2015 and February 2020 respectively, had provisions for appointing serving SC and HC judges as chairpersons and members, in the recent past, either retired top court judges or former chief justices of high courts have headed the body.

Justice (retd) Ritu Raj Awasthi, who headed the 22nd law panel, was appointed a member of the anti-corruption watchdog Lokpal a few months ago. *—PTI*

T'gana to prioritise removal of lake encroachments: CM

HYDERABAD, 3 SEPT

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Tuesday said removal of encroachments on lakes and 'nalas' (drains) would be a priority for the state government in view of the damage caused by them.

At a review meeting with ministers and officials at Mahabubabad district Collectorate after visiting flood-hit areas, he asked officials across the state to prepare reports on encroachments on waterbodies like lakes. "Let's take concrete measures to remove the encroachments by following the modalities. The government would take it as a special action plan. We will take the removal of encroachments on lakes and 'nalas' (drains) as a priority," he said.

Structures in over 20 guntas were razed down by Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Monitoring Agency (HYDRA) in survey number 462 of Ameenpur, Sangareddy district on Tuesday.

He said it is an inexcusable crime to build houses, farmhouses or sell off land by encroaching on waterbodies like lakes. Observing that such encroachments are causing bigger damage (by leading to flooding of residential localities) compared to nature's fury, he said the problem of occupying waterbodies illegally should be put to an end.

The state government has set up the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Protection Agency to remove encroachments, he said. There would be an adverse impact if "nature is attacked" for selfish gains, Reddy said, citing the examples of Uttarakhand or even Hyderabad. *—PTI*

'RELEASE PROBE REPORT'

Allegations against ADGP puts Thrissur Pooram row in spotlight

T'PURAM, 3 SEPT

The recent allegations made by Left Democratic Front (LDF) MLA PV Anvar against senior IPS officer MR Ajith Kumar have brought the Thrissur Pooram back to the spotlight in Kerala, prompting ruling coalition partner Communist Party of India (CPI) to urge the government to release its investigation report on alleged police excesses during the festival this year.

Anvar, in a recent Facebook post, had hinted that it was Ajith Kumar, the ADGP (Law and Order), was behind the police interventions in Pooram rituals and the subsequent controversies which had taken the sheen off the annual spectacle held in April this year.

PHOTO:ANI

The other startling charges levelled by Anvar against the top official, ranging from connections with gold smuggling rackets to illegally amassing wealth, have triggered a political storm in Kerala, prompting the State government to announce a probe into the allegations.

CPI leader and former minister VS Sunil Kumar, the Left candidate in Thrissur during the Lok Sabha polls earlier this year and ex-MP K Muraleedharan, who contested as a Congress nominee, on Tuesday reiterated that police interventions and subsequent controversies on the Pooram festival night had played a key role in the victory of BJP's Suresh Gopi in the constituency.

Sunil Kumar said he doesn't have any information on the alleged role of the ADGP in the incidents that happened on the Pooram night other than the charges levelled by Anvar against him. *—PTI*

Kejri's aide Bibhav Kumar walks out of jail after bail

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar on Tuesday walked out of Tihar jail after getting bail in the Swati Maliwal assault case, official sources said. Kumar was released at 2 pm from the jail number five, where he was lodged for more than three months, the sources added.

On Monday, the Supreme Court had granted bail to Kumar, noting that he has been in custody for more than 100 days.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan also took into account the fact that the prosecution has proposed to examine more than 51 witnesses and said the trial will take time to conclude.

It also noted that since the charge sheet in the case has already been filed, Kumar's release will not cause any prejudice to the investigation. Kumar allegedly assaulted Maliwal on 13 May at Kejriwal's official residence. He was arrested by the Delhi Police on 18 May.

Amanatullah dealt in 'tainted' cash transactions: ED

AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan was dealing with "ill-gotten" money and indulged in "tainted" cash transactions to purchase an immovable property in Delhi, the Enforcement Directorate alleged on Tuesday.

The federal agency has arrested the 50-year-old legislator from Okhla on Monday after conducting a search at his house.

He was produced before a local court the same day that sent him to four-day ED custody. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Villagers kill jackal after it attacks people in UP

HAMIRPUR, 3 SEPT

Villagers killed a jackal on Tuesday after it entered a house and attacked more than half a dozen people. The incident took place at the Bilpur village in the Jalalpur police station area when a jackal entered and attacked six persons, including a woman, officials said. Later, the villagers surrounded the animal and beat it with sticks, leading to its death, they said. Meanwhile, a five-year-old girl was injured in a wolf attack in Mahsi tehsil of Bahraich district on Tuesday. According to the locals, Afsana was sleeping in her house in Pandohia village when a wolf attacked her and the marks of the animal's teeth were visible on her neck. *—PTI*

Obscene gesture: Communal tension grips Uttarakhand

GOPESHWAR, 3 SEPT

Prohibitory orders under section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) have been imposed in Nandanagar and areas within 200 metre radius of the town in view of tension prevailing there and fear amid residents over a man allegedly making an obscene gesture towards a teenaged girl, a senior official said on Tuesday. The accused Arif Khan was produced on Tuesday in the court of Special Sessions and District Judge Dharam Singh, who sent him to 14-day judicial custody. Sseven types of restrictions have been imposed, including a ban on the gathering of five people or more in public places and use of loud speakers in the town and adjoining area; Dharnas and demonstrations, movement with arms and ammunition, uploading of provocative comments and material on social media platforms have also been banned. *—PTI*

MSRTC buses go on strike ahead of Ganesha festival

MUMBAI, 3 SEPT

Ahead of the Ganesha festival starting from 3 to 7 September, the bus services of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) got disrupted on Tuesday in most parts of Maharashtra, as a large section of its employees from the Maharashtra State Transport (ST) Kamgar Sanyukta Kruti Samiti (joint action committee) launched a strike over salary-related and other demands after talks with the state government failed last month. Due to the strike launched by the action committee of 11 trade unions starting midnight, the bus services of the state-run corporation were completely stopped at 35 out of the MSRTC's 250 bus depots across the State. *—PTI*

J'khand stops physical test for cops post 12 deaths

RANCHI, 3 SEPT

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Monday said he has issued instructions to halt the excise constable recruitment drive for three days, even as his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma asserted the BJP will urge the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to probe into the deaths of some aspirants who appeared in the physical tests. The deaths have snowballed into a major controversy, with the BJP claiming that 15 candidates have so far lost their lives, while according to the Jharkhand Police, deaths of 12 aspirants have been reported thus far. The physical tests for Jharkhand excise constable recruitment began on 22 August at seven centres in six districts, and was slated to continue till 9 September. Soren also said a committee of health experts has been formed. *—PTI*

Declare floods nat'l calamity: Naidu to Centre

Naidu said reports will be sent to Centre & he will request BJP to liberally give funds

AMARAVATI, 3 SEPT

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said the recent torrential rain and subsequent floods in Andhra Pradesh, particularly in Vijayawada, is the "biggest disaster" he has witnessed in the state in his political career.

Naidu on Monday also said he would request the Central government to declare the floods in the state as a national calamity. At least 17 people have been killed in rain-related incidents and the floods.

NTR district Collectorate, one of the worst hit by the incessant rains in the state and floods, has been turned into a temporary secretariat by the Chief Minister.

Naidu said reports will be sent to Centre and he will request BJP to liberally give funds to the state. He expressed sadness over the fact that despite the best efforts of the government, some flood victims located in last mile areas could not be supplied food.

National Disaster Response Force teams and local officials on Tuesday began dropping food packets, water bottles and other basic necessities for people in flood-affected areas of Vijayawada on Tuesday. *—PTI*

NTR district Collectorate is one of the worst hit by rains **PHOTO: PTI**

Revanth visits flood-hit areas

Hyderabad, 3 Sept

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy visited flood-affected areas in Mahabubabad district on Tuesday, the second day of his tour to rain-hit places. According to official sources, Reddy stayed overnight in Khammam after visiting several places in the town accompanied by some of his cabinet colleagues. At least 16 people lost their lives in various rain-related incidents as torrential rains lashed Telangana. The state government on Monday put the damage at Rs 5,000 crore.

200 RELOCATED IN HINGOLI, 2L CROP HECTARES HIT

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 3 SEPT

More than 200 prople were relocated and nearly 90 others rescued after heavy rains inundated several areas in Hingoli district of Maharashtra's Marathwada region, while over 2 lakh hectares of land under cultivation got affected in neighbouring Nanded district.

According to officials, 45 revenue circles in Nanded district were affected by the downpour. Crops on more than 2 lakh hectares were affected and 25 animals were reported dead.

Crops in Nanded city, Ardhapur, Hadgaon, Degloor, Mudkhed, Kandhar, Loha and Naigaon were badly damaged due to the rains, they said.

Bharad, Malegaon and Dabhad revenue circles recorded 170 mm rainfall in just 12 hours on Monday, an official said. *—PTI*

Kerala to develop local early warning systems for disasters: CM

T'PURAM, 3 SEPT

Pinarayi Vijayan **PHOTO: PTI**

Kerala government has decided to focus on scientific use of land and deployment of localised early warning systems as part of its efforts to tackle Wayanad-like landslides and other disasters in the future, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said.

He said the landslide forecasting systems were in the "infancy" stage and his government now wants to "strengthen" Kerala's institutes and departments meant for studying climate change by providing them enhanced manpower and modern equipments.

More than 400 people lost their lives even as an equal number of body parts were found from under the debris and from the Chaliyar river after the worst-ever disaster of the state destroyed large tracts of three Wayanad villages--Punchirimattom, Chooralmala and Mundakkai apart from some in Attamala when the disaster struck on 30 July.

"Most of the climate-linked disasters cannot be prevented fully. However, their impacts can be reduced. He said relief shelters have been built at 18 coastal local governments in nine coastal districts and seven hill panchayats of Idukki district. Kerala has demanded from the central government increased observational systems, including more radars, he said. *—PTI*

The accident occurred past midnight in Bidharana village **PHOTO: PTI**

8 killed as truck hits vehicle in Haryana

CHANDIGARH, 3 SEPT

Eight people were killed and 10 others injured after a truck hit a stationary vehicle carrying devotees in Haryana's Jind district, police said on Tuesday.

The accident occurred past midnight in Bidharana village on the Hisar-Chandigarh national highway when the devotees were travelling from Kurukshetra district to a temple at Gogamedi in Rajasthan.

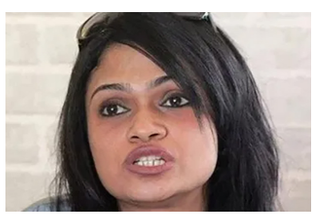
The truck, bearing a Rajasthan registration number, was loaded with wooden logs when it hit the stationary vehicle.

SHO of Sadar Narwana police station Kuldeep said, "The truck rammed into the light commercial vehicle in which the group of devotees was headed to Gogamedi. At the time of the incident, the devotees had taken a brief halt and their vehicle was stationary."

"Eight people, including two women and a 15-year-old boy, have died in the incident while 10 are injured," he told PTI.

The police officer said the injured were taken to hospitals at Narwana in Jind and later referred to Agroha in Hisar. The injured are out of danger, he added. *—PTI*

Actor Rima sues Suchitra over rave party claims



Rima Kallingal sent a defamation notice to Suchitra **PHOTO: X**

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Actor and Women in Cinema Collective (WCC) founding member Rima Kallingal has filed a defamation suit against playback singer Suchitra.

Rima has sent a defamation notice to Suchitra after the latter alleged that Rima's residence was used for a drug-fuelled party.

On 3 September, Rima took to her Instagram platform to term Suchitra's allegations as "baseless." "For years, many of you have stood with the WCC and its cause. It is this support and trust that prompts me to write to you now. Over the past two days, several news outlets have reported on statements made by Tamil singer Suchitra in an interview with a YouTube channel. In the 30-minute interview, she not only names and shames the survivor of the 2017 sexual assault, claiming the survivor 'knew it was coming,' but also alleges that CM Pinarayi, Mohanlal, and Mammootty conspired through the Hema Committee to sabotage careers of actors. We all know why the Hema panel was formed, and anyone suggesting otherwise should be questioned," Rima wrote. *—PTI*

DISPROPORTIONATE ASSETS LAND MINE OFFICIAL IN JAIL

BHUBANESWAR, 3 SEPT

The anti-corruption vigilance sleuths on Tuesday arrested a deputy director of mines for allegedly accumulating assets disproportionate to his known sources of income, an official statement said.

Dharanidhar Nayak, deputy director of mines, Talcher was found in possession of 2 multi-storey buildings, a 3-BHK flat worth Rs 1.30 crore and a duplex over 1,800 sqft area in Bhubaneswar, two market complexes with 19 shops, 11 plots, deposits to the tune of Rs 53.53 lakh, household articles worth Rs 54.70 lakh and over Rs 9.85 lakh in cash, the vigilance statement said. Nayak was posted as mining officer at Koraput in 2014. *—PTI*

Trio who assaulted man on train to be re-arrested

MUMBAI, 3 SEPT

With a court cancelling the bail granted to three men arrested for allegedly assaulting an elderly man in an express train on the suspicion of carrying beef in Maharashtra's Nashik, the Government Railway Police (GRP) has launched an operation to trace the trio to re-arrest them in the case, officials said.

The court cancelled their bail on Monday after the police added the charges of dacoity and hurting religious feelings against them.

The 72-year-old victim, Ashraf Ali Sayyed Hussain, from Jalgaon district in north Maharashtra, was assaulted by a group on board the Dhule-Mumbai CSMT Express on 28 August on the suspicion of carrying beef.

A video of the incident went viral on social media **PHOTO: PTI**

A video of the incident went viral on social media and the police arrested three men from Dhule: Akash Awhad, 30, Nitesh Ahire, 30, and Jayesh Mohite, 21, on August 31. They were presented in a court the next day, which granted bail to them.

As the GRP could not keep them in its custody after they were granted bail, the accused were allowed to go home, an official said. *—PTI*

200 fall ill in Noida due to contaminated water

NOIDA, 3 SEPT

Several residents, mostly children, of a Noida Extension group housing society have taken ill, with residents suspecting water contamination as the cause.

Raj Kumar, a media professional and resident of Supertech Ecovillage 2, said the issue came to light when residents were discussing water shortage on a WhatsApp group on Monday evening.

"One resident mentioned that his child had diarrhea and vomiting. Soon after, another resident reported the same symptoms in their child, and more people began sharing similar experiences. It quickly became evident that hundreds of residents had fallen ill," Kumar told PTI.

Another resident, Ashish Srivastava, suggested that water contamination might be the cause, as the society's water tanks were cleaned a few days ago.

Residents at a hospital after they fell sick allegedly due to drinking polluted water, in Greater Noida, Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

While society residents claim the number of affected individuals exceeds 100, the local health department said it is yet to determine the exact figure and the cause of the illnesses.

"Our teams are currently at the society for inspection and to address the complaints. Health teams also visited the society last night after we began receiving reports from there. I have requested a report from the teams, and once I receive it, the situation will be clearer," Gautam Buddh Nagar Chief Medical Officer Dr Sunil Sharma told PTI on Tuesday morning. *—PTI*

1 dies, 9 ill after drinking water in Bihar school

A girl died and at least nine students of a school in Bihar's Nalanda district fell ill after allegedly consuming water. The deceased was not a student of the school and she had come to meet her friends at the school. Nalanda District Magistrate PT that some students complained of vomiting and stomach ache after drinking water from the RO system installed in the school premise.

Netflix changes 'IC-814' disclaimer amid row

MUMBAI, 3 SEPT

Netflix India on Tuesday said it has updated the opening disclaimer of its latest series 'IC814: The Kandahar Hijack', which has courted controversy over its depiction of hijackers' code names.

Monika Shergill, Vice President, Content at Netflix India, comments come after her meeting with the Information and Broadcasting Secretary Sanjay Jaju in New Delhi. She was summoned by the ministry after concerns were raised in some quarters about various issues, including Hindu code names used by the hijackers and the alleged humane face given to some of them. Directed by Anubhav Sinha and featuring a stellar cast of Vijay Varma, Patralekhaa, Pankaj Kapur, Naseeruddin Shah, Arvind Swamy, Dia Mirza, the series chronicles the true story of the December 1999 hijack. *—PTI*

PHOTO:NETFLIX

AVERAGE PACKAGE RS 23.5L

IIT-B min salary package drops to ₹4 lakh

MUMBAI, 3 SEPT

Placements at IIT-Bombay concluded for 2024, with an average annual package of Rs 23.5 lakh, a slight increase from last year's Rs 21.8 lakh. However, the packages offered were as low as Rs 4 lakh per annum, raising further concerns in the education industry.

The Engineering and Technology sector recruited the highest numbers of students.

In various engineering domains, 430 students were selected in 106 core engineering companies at entry-level positions. Information Technology and tech hiring have slightly more this season compared to last year.

The Engineering and Technology sector recruited the highest numbers of students. **PHOTO:IIT**

Around 307 students have been offered IT/Software jobs by over 84 companies through campus placement, making the IT

sector the second biggest recruiter after the engineering sector.

Compared to last year fewer selections, i.e. 117 consulting offers were made by 29 consulting companies. Trading, Banking, and Fintech companies were prominent recruiters. The finance sector has 113 offers from 33 financial service firms this year. Profiles in Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Product Management, Mobility, 5G, Data Science and Analytics, and Education also saw brisk hiring trends.

This year, IIT Bombay witnessed a 12 per cent increase in the number of recruiting companies, with 543 companies registering for the placement process. *—ANI*

Mysterious fever claims lives of 3 Bihar children

GUWAHATI, 23 JAN

At least three children have died at Raniganj village of Bihar's Araria district following a "mysterious fever" in the last three days, officials said.

Although family members of the deceased claimed that the children died due to Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES), or brain fever, an illness locally known as "Chamki Bukhar", the district administration maintained that medical experts are trying to find out the exact reason behind the death. The deceased were Raunak Kumar, 4, Ankush Kumar (2 months old) and Gauri Kumar, 7.

Villagers claimed that more children suffering from mysterious fever were admitted to the nearest government hospital. Speaking to PTI, Inayat Khan, District Magistrate (DM) of Araria, said, "Yes, it is true that three children died in Raniganj village in the last three days. The family members have said that the children were suffering from cough and cold and pneumonia-like symptoms. *—PTI*

DEATH TRAPS

The newly constructed road connecting Hirasar Airport to the Rajkot-Limbidi Highway in Gujarat is severely damaged following recent heavy rains . The government had approved Rs 100 crore for the road's construction in December 2023. This raises question on the quality of work done and material used

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

BIBI IN TROUBLE AS PAIN TURNS TO RAGE IN ISRAEL

Israelis are once again venting their anger over the failure of the government to reach a deal to release the hostages still being held by Hamas in Gaza.

Hundreds of thousands of protesters have taken to the streets across the country over the past couple days, with some gathering outside the homes of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the US embassy. The first nationwide strike since last October's Hamas attack also brought the country to a standstill.

The spark for the protests was the discovery of the bodies of six hostages who had been executed by Hamas shortly before Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) located them. On Monday, Netanyahu issued a rare apology to the families.

The demonstrations mark a new low in the relationship between large segments of the Israeli public and their elected government, which now seems beyond repair.

So, how will Netanyahu respond?

People attend a rally demanding a ceasefire deal and the immediate release of hostages held by Hamas, in Tel Aviv, Israel, on Monday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Two years of mass demonstrations

Massive protests have been a regular feature in Israel since the most Right-wing government in Israel's history was formed in January 2023.

Throughout much of 2023, protesters marched in the streets in outrage over the government's proposals to reform the judicial system, which aimed to limit the power of Israel's Supreme Court. And following 7 October attack, the families of the hostages have held regular rallies calling on the government to do everything possible, including making painful concessions to Hamas in ceasefire negotiations, to bring them home.

Between a rock and a hard place

Endless rounds of ceasefire negotiations since the start of the war – mediated by the US, Egypt and Qatar – have yielded no concrete results.

After months of wrangling, the US is planning to present both sides with what it calls a "take it or leave it" deal in the coming weeks.

Hamas is insisting on a complete Israeli withdrawal from all of Gaza as part of the agreement, while Israel is demanding an ongoing IDF presence in two corridors in the enclave. While mediators had hoped a compromise was achievable, Netanyahu recently hardened his position.

Last week, the security cabinet backed his position requiring the IDF remain deployed in the Philadelphi Corridor, a buffer zone between Egypt and Gaza, in any ceasefire deal. This comes after Netanyahu reportedly clashed with the country's top security chiefs, who had urged him to accept a deal.

Politically, Netanyahu is between a rock and a hard place. His coalition partners, Far-Right ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, threaten to bring down the government if he accepts what they call a "promiscuous" deal with Hamas that doesn't guarantee a "complete victory" in the war.

Both are leading figures in a fringe settler group with grandiose visions of resettling Jews in the Gaza Strip.

At the same time, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, a fierce Netanyahu rival, has blamed him for deliberately sabotaging any chance of a hostage deal to secure his own political survival.

Gallant argues a ceasefire is the only way to release the hostages and end the Gaza war so the IDF can mobilise against the dramatic threat from the north — Hezbollah, the Iranian terrorist proxy positioned along the Lebanese border. The government's failure to prioritise the lives of hostages above all else has been compounded by insensitivity from top officials. Netanyahu was even quoted in July saying, "The hostages are suffering but not dying".

'Shake those who need to be shaken'

In recent weeks, it has become painfully clear that Netanyahu was wrong. The discovery of more and more bodies of hostages inside Gaza has shocked Israelis.

The final straw came on 31 August when IDF soldiers uncovered the bodies of the six hostages slain by Hamas.

The outrage grew even more when it was revealed some of the young men and women were reportedly scheduled to be released in the ceasefire proposal discussed weeks ago.

The mass protests are evidence that many in Israel feel abandoned by their own government, which they believe has betrayed the Jewish moral imperative, "All of Israel is responsible for one another" (Kol Yisrael arevim zeh lazeh).

The Histadrut, the umbrella organisation of Israeli labour unions, called a nationwide strike on Monday to "shake those who need to be shaken". The government was granted an injunction to stop the strike, but not before many parts of the Israeli economy were shut down for a few hours, including the airport, schools and banks.

Despite the outpouring of emotions on the street, Netanyahu is unlikely to change course. Backed by his base and encouraged by some conservative pollsters suggesting he is slowly regaining popularity among right-wing voters, he probably has more to lose from making concessions now to Hamas than from striking a deal.

Scheduled elections are at least two years away. Early elections could only be triggered if five members of the governing coalition join the Opposition in a no-confidence vote, but this is unlikely because it would end their political careers. His chief rivals also lack a clear majority to bring down the government on their own. *—PTI*

SALAR ساڈا

Extreme weather leads to rise in Pak child marriages

Saima (name changed) was just 15 when she was married off last summer to a man twice her age in Dadu district, in the southern Sindh province of Pakistan.

The wedding took place shortly ahead of the monsoon season, which brings with it torrential rain and floods.

The family was worried that there could be a repeat of the situation in 2022, when massive rains and unprecedented floods plunged a third of the country under water, displacing millions and ruining harvests.

Saima's family was also displaced by the climate calamity and her father, agricultural worker Allah Bukhsh, lost his livelihood.

Unable to feed the family, Bukhsh decided to marry Saima off in exchange for 200,000 Pakistani rupees.

"We made the decision to avoid the monsoon rain and suffering in the camps. It is not an easy thing to do," Bukhsh told DW.

Saima said she was initially "happy to be married but things are not as easy as I had expected."

The now 16-year-old gave birth to a child this year. "My responsibilities have doubled now."

Marriages of survival

Child marriages are rife in various regions of the Islamic nation.

According to government data published in December, Pakistan is home to the sixth-highest number of girls married before the age of 18 in the world.

The legal age for marriage varies from 16 to 18 in different regions, but the law is rarely enforced.

Rights groups have said extreme weather events are increasingly putting girls at risk.

"There are 45 cases of child marriages registered in Dadu in the last one year and I believe there could be dozens more that are not registered," Niaz Ahmed Chandio, coordinator of local NGO the Child Rights Committee, told DW.

Activists said in these cases marriage is often about survival, with families desperate to find any means to get by.

Mashooque Birhmani, the founder of the NGO Sujag Sansar, which works with religious scholars to combat child marriage, said poverty and displacement force families to give their daughters away in marriage in exchange for money.

"These are marriages of survival prompted by the monsoon season and the reason behind marrying off a girl is to reduce the feeding costs at home during the climate calamity," said Sansar.

Osama Malik, an attorney, shares a similar view.

"The floods of recent years have been extremely devastating, leading to the destruction of crops and livestock, and poor farmers have been forced to marry off their daughters as soon as they reach puberty," said Malik.

The United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, said Pakistan had made "significant strides" in reducing child marriage over the past two decades.

However, the country has suffered significantly from the impacts of climate change, it noted, citing as an example the intense flooding in 2022.

"Evidence shows that extreme weather events like this are correlated with an increased risk of child marriage," UNICEF said in a report after the floods.

"In a year with an event of this severity, we would expect to see an 18% increase in the prevalence of child marriage, equivalent to erasing five years of progress."

The Sindh government, however, has denied reports that climate-driven economic insecurity was causing child marriages in the province.

"There are no underage marriages taking place in Dadu, and girls getting married are adults, not child brides," Hidayat Ali Shah, deputy director of the Child Protection Authority in Dadu district, told DW.

Call for raising awareness

Pakistan's patriarchal society has only compounded the problem.

"Girls are seen as a burden in the larger families, and someone to be offloaded soon," said Afia Salam, a journalist focused on environmental and gender issues.

"This patriarchal thinking must be addressed through awareness," she stressed.

Child marriages often lead to girls facing early motherhood and lifelong reproductive health issues. They are also left with no education and employment prospects, making them vulnerable and entirely dependent on their families for survival. Chandio, of the Child Rights Committee, said parents and local communities must be educated about the dangers of child marriage and its impact on the lives of young girls.

"Strengthening and enforcing laws and social security measures from the government and aid groups are key to tackling the issue among the vulnerable communities." *—DW News*

In 2022, rains and floods plunged a third of Pakistan under water ***PHOTO: HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

In a story of survival, children of landslide-hit Wayanad back to school

They looked fresh in new uniforms and seemed relieved when they reunited with their friends after weeks, putting behind the trauma of a natural calamity that may have scarred them for life.

The enthusiastic children clapped loudly and sang their favourite songs when the state-run buses started to ply with them from the devastated Chooralmala town to nearby Meppadi through the winding mountain roads on Monday morning.

It was the journey of the children of the landslide-hit hamlets of Wayanad to resume their studies after 30 days after the massive disaster shook their lives and deprived them of everything in life, from schools and study material to home and family members, besides some of their buddies.

Two state-run schools in the area, Mundakkai GLPS and Vellarmala GVHSS had suffered immense damage in the July 30 calamity, which had also claimed the lives of several children who studied there.

As over a month passed after the landslides devastated the interiors of the hill district, the Kerala government, under the auspices of the General Education Department, had made arrangements to resume the studies of the survivor children.

Children of the landslide-hit hamlets of Wayanad resume their studies after 30 days ***PHOTO: UNICEF/PTI***

Temporary classrooms were set up for them in the government higher secondary school and at the panchayat community hall in nearby Meppadi.

Thus, over 600 children of Mundakkai and Vellarmala schools restarted their studies amid colourful ceremonies and festivities on Monday.

Many children expressed their wish to study well and thus overcome the shock of the unexpected tragedy.

Mohammed Shahid, a class VI student, was seen happily seated in one of the buses with his friends.

"I want to study well. That's my hope while resuming the studies," he said with a smile.

Ahalya, another student, also shared the happiness of restarting studies, but Ajmal, a 9th standard student, said he did not know whether he was happy or not at the moment.

"If you are asking me whether I am happy now, I am not," he said and stared out of the window.

One of the parents said while their locality may be a small one, but there was no need for them to go outside for anything.

"Everything was here, from school and bank to post office... it is for the first time that these children are going out for their study requirements. Let them adapt to the new circumstances and go ahead," she said.

The children of Vellarmala and Mundakkai were given a grand welcome on Monday at Meppadi, located some 10 kilometres away from the landslide-hit areas.

They were ushered to their new class rooms by general education minister V Sivankutty, his cabinet colleagues, and other people's representatives who offered them sweets, as a band performance accompanied them.

The temporary classes had all facilities, including fresh furniture and other study material. The classes were painted with beautiful pictures to bring happiness and positivity to the minds of children.

Minister Sivankutty, who inaugurated the "Punapraveshanotsavsm" (re-opening ceremony), urged children to study well and go ahead in life and assured the entire state is there to support them.

"The State government is committed to ensuring that the education of not even a single affected child is hampered. We stand united to restore normalcy and ensure a brighter future for the survivours," Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said in a post on 'X.'

Major landslides hit the Mundakkai and Chooralamala regions of Wayanad on 30 July, almost decimating both areas and killing over 400 people and injuring many. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X@VATICANNEWS

Pope Francis begins trip to Indonesia

JAKARTA, 3 SEPT

Pope Francis arrived in Indonesia on Tuesday at the start of the longest trip of his pontificate, hoping to encourage its Catholic community and celebrate the tradition of interfaith harmony in a country with the world's largest Muslim population. After an overnight flight from Rome, Francis was wheeled off the plane in his wheelchair and onto the tarmac for a welcoming ceremony under Jakarta's perennial hazy, humid and polluted skies. Two children wearing traditional clothes handed him a bouquet of vegetables, fruits, spices and flowers. Francis planned to rest for the remainder of the day, given the rigors of an 11-day voyage zigzagging across time zones that will also take him to Papua New Guinea, East Timor and Singapore. However, the Vatican said the 87-year-old pope met with a group oVf refugees, migrants and sick people at the Vatican residence in Jakarta. *—AP*

Taiwan accuses China of launching satellite

TAIPEI, 3 SEPT

Taiwan's Ministry of Defence has alleged that China launched a satellite over Taiwan with its flight path passing over the southwestern Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) of the island nation. Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence said that the satellite launched from Xichang Satellite Launch Centre (XSLC) posed "no threat" to the nation, adding that Taiwan Armed Forces monitored the whole process and are ready to respond if the need arises. "At 09.20 am, #PLA launched a satellite from #XSLC, with its flight path passing over our southwestern ADIZ. Poses no threat to us, the flight path flew toward the West Pacific Ocean. *—ANI*

11 killed, 13 injured in China bus crash

BEIJING, 3 SEPT

At least 11 persons were killed and 13 injured when a bus rammed into a crowd of students at the gate of a middle school in east China's Shandong province on Tuesday, police said. A rental bus hired for transporting students "lost control" and crashed into pedestrians in Tai'an city around 7.30 a.m., the police said. Among 13 injured, at least one person remains in critical condition while others are stable, the police said. The bus driver has been detained and an investigation has been initiated into the cause of the accident, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. It is not clear if the incident is an accident or an intentional attack on children. Attacks on kindergarten schools by "disgruntled elements" are common in China. In June, a man launched an attack at a school bus stop in Jiangsu province, killing one person and injuring two others.*—PTI*

UAE leader pardons 57 Bangladeshis imprisoned in Arab

DUBAI, 3 SEPT

The leader of the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday pardoned 57 Bangladeshi nationals convicted in rapid trials over their involvement in protests in the Arabian Peninsula nation about unrest in their home country. The decision by Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the ruler of Abu Dhabi, came after he held a telephone call last week with Bangladesh's interim prime minister, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus. Yunus took over Bangladesh after demonstrators drove longtime Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to flee the country. The arrests in the UAE underlined the strict laws criminalizing speech and public protest in this Gulf Arab country that is home to the cities of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. *—PTI*

PUTIN GETS LAVISH WELCOME IN MONGOLIA DESPITE ICC WARRANT

The warrant accuses Putin of illegally deporting many children from Ukraine

ULAANBAATAR, 3 SEPT

Russian President Vladimir Putin was visiting Mongolia on Tuesday with no sign that the host country would bow to calls to arrest him on an international warrant for alleged war crimes stemming from the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The trip is Putin's first to a member country of the International Criminal Court since it issued the warrant about 18 months ago. Ahead of his visit, Ukraine called on Mongolia to hand Putin over to the court in The Hague, and the European Union expressed concern that Mongolia might not execute the warrant. A spokesperson for Putin said last week that the Kremlin wasn't worried.

The warrant puts the Mongolian government in a tough spot. Member countries are required by the ICC's founding treaty, the Rome Statute, to detain suspects if an arrest warrant has been issued. But Mongolia, a landlocked country bordering Russia, is highly dependent on its much larger neighbour for fuel and some of its electricity. The court lacks a mechanism to enforce its warrants.

The Russian leader was welcomed in the main square in Ulaanbaatar, the capital, by an honour guard dressed in vivid red and blue uniforms styled on those of the personal guard of 13th century ruler Genghis Khan, the founder of the Mongol Empire.

Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh greets Russian President Vladimir Putin during welcoming ceremony in Mongolia **PHOTO: PTI**

A small group of protesters who tried to unfurl a Ukrainian flag before the welcome ceremony were taken away by police. Sitting down for talks with Khurelsukh, Putin said that relations between their two countries "are developing in all areas." He invited the Mongolian president to attend a summit of the BRICS nations — a group that includes Russia and China among others — in the Russian city of Kazan in late October. Khurelsukh accepted, according to Russian state news agency RIA Novosti.

More than 50 Russians outside the country have signed an open letter urging the government of Mongolia to "immediately detain Vladimir Putin upon his arrival." The signers include Vladimir Kara-Murza, who was freed from a Russian prison in August in the biggest East-West prisoner swap since the Cold War.

Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy secretary of Russia's Security Council, denounced the warrant against Putin as "illegal" in an online statement Tuesday and those who would try to carry it out as "madmen." *—AP*

Russian missile strike kills 41 in Ukraine, says Zelenskyy

KIYV, 3 SEPT

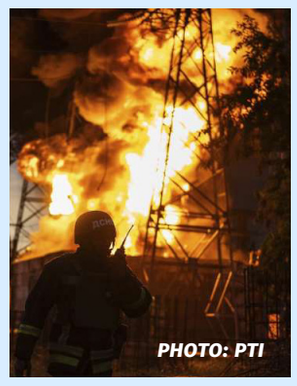


PHOTO: PTI

A Russian missile strike killed at least 41 people and wounded more than 180 others in Ukraine's city of Poltava on Tuesday, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. Zelenskyy said in a video that the Russian forces hit the city with two ballistic missiles, damaging a building of the Institute of Communications. Moscow has not commented on the attack, but a well-known Russian military blogger Vladimir Rogov reported earlier on Tuesday that Russia struck a military school in Poltava. *—Agencies*

Suspect held for transferring money to Mossad in Turkey

ANKARA, 3 SEPT

Turkish police have arrested a suspect believed to have been transferring money to operatives from Israel's Mossad intelligence agency in Turkey, the state-run news agency reported on Tuesday.

The suspect, identified as Liridon Rexhepi from Kosovo, entered Turkey on 25 August, and was detained last Friday and formally arrested on Tuesday, the Anadolu Agency said. The report said he had confessed during interrogation that he conducted the money transfers.

Israel has not commented on the arrests in Turkiye. Since the start of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been one of the strongest critics of Israel's military actions there and has praised Palestinian Hamas militants as a liberation group. In May, Turkiye halted all trade with Israel and has also applied to participate in a genocide case against Israel at an international court. *—AP*

AFTER MASSIVE PROTEST

Netanyahu pushes back against new pressure over Gaza

TEL AVIV, 2 SEPT

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday pushed back against a new wave of pressure to reach a cease-fire deal in Gaza after hundreds of thousands of Israelis protested and went on strike and US President Joe Biden said he needed to do more after nearly 11 months of fighting.

Netanyahu also issued a rare apology to the families of the six executed hostages. In his first public address since Sunday's mass protests showed many Israelis' furious response to the discovery of six more dead hostages, Netanyahu said he will continue to insist on a demand that has emerged as a major sticking point in talks — continued Israeli control of the Philadelphi corridor, a narrow band along Gaza's border with Egypt where Israel contends Hamas smuggles weapons into Gaza. Egypt and Hamas deny it.

Netanyahu called the corridor vital to ensuring Hamas cannot rearm via tunnels. "This is the oxygen of Hamas," he said. And he added: "No one is more committed to freeing the hostages than me. But no one will preach to me."

Benjamin Netanyahu **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

Israelis had poured into the streets late Sunday in grief and anger in what appeared to be the largest protest since the start of the war.

The families and much of the public blamed Netanyahu, saying the hostages could have been returned alive in a deal with Hamas. A rare general strike was held across the country on Monday.

Key ally the United States is showing impatience. Biden spoke to reporters as he arrived at the White House for a Situation Room meeting with the US mediation team in the negotiations. He insisted that negotiators remain "very close" to a deal, adding, "Hope springs eternal." *—AP*

B'desh ex-PM Khaleda acquitted in 5 cases

DHAKA, 3 SEPT

Bangladesh's former prime minister Khaleda Zia has been acquitted in five separate cases, including one filed over allegations of celebrating a "fake birthday" and another for supporting war criminals, a media report said on Tuesday.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mahbubul Haque's court issued acquittal orders in four cases whereas Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Tofazzal Hossain's court acquitted her in one case on Tuesday, The Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported. The defendant, 79-year-old Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chairperson Zia, was acquitted after the plaintiff did not appear in court. In August 2016, a case was filed against Zia by a journalist for celebrating a "fake birthday".

Although five different birthdates of Zia were found through various sources, none was on 15 August. It said that despite this, she has been celebrating her birthday on August 15, which is the national mourning day commemorating the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman since 1996. The complaint alleged that the BNP leader celebrates her birthday on this day solely to tarnish the reputation of Bangabandhu and his family. *—PTI*

US Prez campaigns ready for intense sprint

LA CROSSE, 3 SEPT

After a summer of historic tumult, the path to the presidency for both Kamala Harris and Donald Trump this fall is becoming much clearer.

The Democratic vice president and the Republican former president will devote almost all of their remaining time and resources to just seven states. They will spend hundreds of millions of dollars targeting voters who, in many cases, have just begun to pay attention to the election. And their campaigns will try to focus their messages on three familiar issues — the economy, immigration and abortion — even in the midst of heated debates over character, culture and democracy.

The candidates will debate in one week in what will be their first meeting ever. The nation's premier swing state, Pennsylvania, begins in-person absentee voting the week after. By the end of the month, early voting will be underway in at least four states with a dozen more to follow by mid-October.

Donal Trump **PHOTO: PTI**

Kamala Harris **PHOTO: PTI**

In just 63 days, the final votes will be cast to decide which one of them will lead the world's most powerful nation. Privately, at least, both camps acknowledge that victory is no sure thing as they begin the eight-week sprint to Election Day. Harris and Trump are neck-and-neck in most national polls conducted since President Joe Biden ended his reelection campaign.

The Harris campaign still put out a memo over the weekend casting itself as "the clear underdogs" in the contest.

Trump, meanwhile, rejects any indicators that suggest Harris is ahead even as he lashes out at her in deeply personal and sometimes apocalyptic terms, declaring that "our country is finished" if she wins. *—AP*

Pak witnessed 59 terror attacks in August

ISLAMABAD, 3 SEPT

In continued increase in terror attacks, a total of 59 terrorist attacks occurred across Pakistan in August 2024 killing 84 people compared to 38 such attacks in the previous month, a media report said on Tuesday.

The August attacks take the total number of attacks in 2024 to 325, according to the digital database of security incidents managed by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), an Islamabad-based think-tank. These incidents include 29 attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 28 in Balochistan and two in Punjab, the PIPS data said, adding, as many as 84 people were killed and 166 others were injured, newspaper The Dawn said.

Also, since 2006, there have been 17,846 terrorist incidents in which 24,373 people have been killed and 48,085 others injured, according to the PIPS database. Balochistan experienced 28 terrorist incidents during August 2024, which resulted in 57 deaths and injuries to another 84 people. Most of these terrorism-related casualties resulted from the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) orchestrated simultaneous attacks on August 26 in over seven districts of the province targeting security forces, non-Baloch people, mainly Punjabis, and national infrastructure.

Since 2006, there have been 17,846 terrorist incidents in which 24,373 people have been killed in Pakistan **PHOTO: X**

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 29 terrorist attacks claimed 25 lives and wounded 80 others. Banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group, Lashkar-e-Islam, Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K) and a few local Taliban groups reportedly carried out these attacks, the report said. *—PTI*

AUDI BOSS FALLS 10,000FT TO HIS DEATH IN MOUNTAIN

ITALY, 3 SEPT

The head of Audi's Italiana operations, Fabrizio Longo on Sunday fell 10,000 feet to his death while attempting to climb the Cima Payer in northern Italy's Adamello mountains and lost his footing near the summit.

The 62-year-old who was also described as an expert mountaineer was spotted by a hiker leading to search and rescue operations at the accident spot. He was spotted 700 feet inside a gorge but was declared dead on the spot. Longo's body was shifted to a hospital in the nearby town of Carisolo with the help of a helicopter team. An investigation has been launched. The funeral date ís not yet annoucned.

Born in the town of Rimini in 1962, Longo has a degree in political science. He began his career in the automotive industry at Fiat in 1987, where he worked in marketing before taking charge of the Lancia brand in 2002.

He became director of the company's Italian operations a year later.

—Salar News with Agencies

DOZENS INJURED

129 dead in DR Congo jail break attempt

KINSHASA, 3 SEPT

An attempted jailbreak in Congo's main prison in the capital left at least 129 people dead, most of them in a stampede, authorities said on Tuesday.

A provisional assessment showed that 24 inmates were shot dead by "warning" gunshots as they tried to escape from the overcrowded Makala Central Prison in Kinshasa early Monday, Congolese Interior Minister Jacquemin Shabani said on the social platform X.

"There are also 59 injured people taken into care by the government, as well as some cases of women raped," he said, adding that order has been restored at the prison, part of which was burned in the attack. Makala, Congo's largest penitentiary with a capacity for 1,500 people, holds over 12,000 inmates, most of whom are awaiting trial, Amnesty International said in its latest country report. The facility has recorded previous vjailbreaks, including in 2017 when an attack by a religious sect freed dozens.

A provisional assessment showed that 24 inmates were shot dead by "warning" gunshots **PHOTO: X@NEWSAFRICANOW**

Gunfire inside the prison started around midnight on Sunday into Monday morning, residents said. A senior government official earlier said only two deaths were confirmed during the incident, a figure disputed by rights activists.

There were no signs of forced entry into the prison, which is located in the city centre, 5 kilometres from the presidential palace. The attempted escape was plotted from inside the prison by inmates in one of the wings, Mbemba Kabuya, the deputy justice minister, told the local Top Congo FM radio. In the hours that followed the attack, the road to the prison was cordoned off while authorities convened a panel to investigate the incident. Makala — among other prisons in Congo — is so overcrowded that people often die from starvation, activists say. Scores of inmates have been released this year as part of efforts to decongest the prisons. *—AP*

No screens before age of 2: Sweden tells parents

STOCKHOLM, 3 SEPT

Children under the age of two should not be exposed to any screens whatsoever and teenagers should have no more than three hours of screen time a day, according to guidelines announced by health authorities in Sweden.

Parents and guardians should think about how they use screens with their children and tell them what they are doing on their phones when they use them in their presence, the advice says. The guidelines, announced on Monday, mark the first time that Folkhälsomyndigheten, Sweden's public health authority, has stipulated how parents should regulate screen time. Screen use among two- to five-year-olds should be limited to a maximum of one hour, while children aged between six and 12 should not use screens for more than two hours. The health agency also recommended that children do not use screens before bedtime and that screens should not be allowed in bedrooms at night. *—Courtesy, The Guardian*

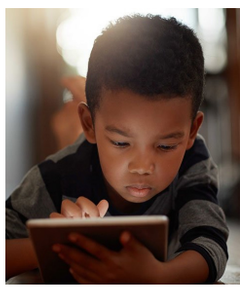


PHOTO: PTI

Gold slips ₹50; silver slumps ₹250

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Gold prices slipped Rs 50 to Rs 74,050 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had finished at Rs 74,100 per 10 grams in the previous session on Monday. Silver prices also slumped by Rs 250 to Rs 85,250 per kilogram on Tuesday. It had closed atRs 85,500 per kg in the previous close. Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity fell by Rs 50 to Rs 73,700 per 10 grams. On the global front, Comex gold is trading at USD 2,531.40 per ounce, up by USD 3.80 per ounce or 0.15 per cent. However, silver was quoted 1.81 per cent lower at USD 28.62 per ounce in the international markets. "Gold fluctuated in a narrow range on Tuesday as traders remained sidelined ahead of US job market data that may influence the US Federal Reserve's (Fed) interest rate-cutting path. *—PTI*

Rupee falls 5 paise to end at 83.96 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 3 SEPT

The rupee declined 5 paise to 83.96 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, tracking a strong greenback against major currencies overseas and a sluggish trend in domestic equities. However, lower crude oil prices in international markets capped the decline in the local unit, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened 3 paise lower at 83.94 against the American currency and traded in the range of 83.94-83.98 during the day. It finally settled at 83.96 (provisional) against the US dollar, 5 paise lower than its previous close. On Monday, the domestic currency settled at 83.91. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was up 0.15 per cent at 101.80. *—PTI*

Bajaj Finance ₹6,560 cr IPO to open on 9 Sept

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Bajaj Housing Finance on Tuesday said it has fixed a price band of Rs 66-70 per share for its Rs 6,560-crore initial share sale. The initial public offering (IPO) will open for public subscription on 9 September and conclude on 11 September and the bidding for anchor investors will open for a day on 6 September, the company announced. The proposed IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares of up to Rs 3,560 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of equity shares to the tune of Rs 3,000 crore by parent Bajaj Finance. The share sale is being conducted to comply with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) regulations, which require upper-layer non-banking finance companies to be listed on stock exchanges by September 2025. Investors can make a bid for a minimum of 214 equity shares and in multiples of 214 equity shares thereafter. *—PTI*

GE Power inks settlement pact with NECL

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

GE Power India on Tuesday said it has entered into a settlement agreement with Navayuga Engineering Company Ltd (NECL). As part of the full and final settlement, NECL has agreed to pay a sum of Rs 31,45,26,287, a BSE filing said. Under this agreement, the instalments are spread across on a quarterly basis and the last instalment will be received in 2026, it stated. An arbitration related to the E&M (Electrical and Mechanical) Turnkey Contract between the company and NECL has been ongoing since 2020, it said. During the course of the legal proceedings, the parties reached an agreement to amicably resolve the dispute. *—PTI*

WORLD BANK UPS INDIA GROWTH FORECAST TO 7%

Earlier the projection for India was at 6.6% for FY24

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

The World Bank on Tuesday raised the growth forecast for the Indian economy to 7 per cent for the current fiscal year on the back of recovery in agri sector and rural demand.

World Bank had in June projected India to grow at 6.6 per cent for FY24.

According to the World Bank Report released on Tuesday, India's growth continues to be strong despite a challenging global environment.

Improvement in monsoon and private consumption have led to revising the India gross domestic product (GDP) forecast, said World Bank senior Economist Ran Li.

The growth rate of India, which accounts for the bulk of the South Asia region, is expected to remain strong at 7 per cent in 2024-25, the World Bank said in the India Development Update.

The report, titled India's Trade Opportunities in a Changing Global Context, highlights India's status as the fastest-growing major economy, with a remarkable growth rate of 8.2 per cent in FY23/24.

This growth was primarily driven by significant public infrastructure investments and a surge in household investments in the real estate sector. On the supply side, a buoyant manufacturing sector, which expanded by 9.9 per cent, and resilient services activity played crucial roles in offsetting the underperformance of the agriculture sector.

The report also anticipates a decline in India's debt-to-GDP ratio from 83.9 per cent in FY23/24 to 82 per cent by FY26/27 *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

- According to the World Bank Report released on Tuesday, India's growth continues to be strong despite a challenging global environment

Despite global economic headwinds, the World Bank's outlook for India remains positive, with growth projected to remain strong at 7 percent in FY24/25 and continue robustly through FY26/27.

The report also anticipates a decline in India's debt-to-GDP ratio from 83.9 per cent in FY23/24 to 82 per cent by FY26/27, alongside a stable current account deficit of around 1-1.6 per cent of GDP over the same period.

Recovery in agriculture will partially offset a marginal moderation in industry, it said, adding that services will remain robust. Rural private consumption will recover, thanks to the expected recovery in agriculture, the World Bank said. *—PTI*

SENSEX DIPS 4.40 PTS

Market settles flat; Nifty on upward track

MUMBAI, 3 SEPT

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty took a breather after a record rally and ended on a flat note on Tuesday, with the 50-stock index settling in the green for the 14th straight session.

Halting its 10-day rally, the 30-share BSE Sensex dipped 4.40 points or 0.01 per cent to settle at 82,555.44. During the day, it dropped 159.08 points or 0.19 per cent to 82,400.76.

The NSE Nifty eked out a marginal gain of 1.15 points to settle at 25,279.85, its highest-ever closing level.

Among the 30 Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Infosys, Adani Ports, JSW Steel, HCL Tech, Bharti Airtel, IndusInd Bank and Tata Motors were the biggest laggards.

ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Titan, Nestle and HDFC Bank were among the gainers.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower.

European markets were quoting in the negative territory. The US markets were closed on Monday for the Labour Day holiday.

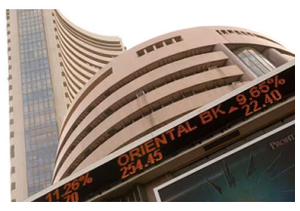


PHOTO: PTI

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,735.46 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.79 per cent to USD 76.13 a barrel.

Surging for the 10th straight session on Monday, the BSE benchmark jumped 194.07 points or 0.24 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 82,559.84. During the day, it surged 359.51 points or 0.43 per cent to reach a new intra-day record peak of 82,725.28. *—PTI*

Textile exports to remain strong amid global shifts

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

The Indian textile industry is set to experience developments in 2024, driven by improving demand in export markets, resilient consumer spending in key sectors, and favourable geopolitical conditions, according to the B&K Securities report.

In the ready-made garments (RMG) sector, the demand offtake in export markets is anticipated to show substantial improvement in 2024.

While domestic demand is expected to remain moderate due to lower discretionary spending and overstocking from the previous fiscal year, the recovery in export demand is promising. The domestic market could see a boost in the second half of FY25, supported by an increase in wedding days and festive season, although the rise in realisations is likely to be marginal.

The ongoing crisis in Bangladesh, a major player in the global RMG market, presents a temporary tailwind for Indian exporters.

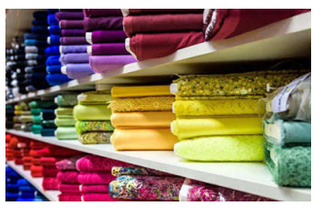


PHOTO: PTI

However, the benefits for India are expected to be short-lived due to differences in product portfolios.

Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with the UK and the European Union offer additional opportunities for growth, potentially leading to higher margins and increased market share for players.

While the industry is on a positive trajectory, it faces near-term challenges such as logistical disruptions due to the Red Sea crisis and domestic cotton prices. *—ANI*

FOR TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION

Gadkari favours 51% stake to foreign company in JV

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday favoured giving a majority 51 per cent stake to foreign partners in joint ventures for building tunnels and detailed project reports to improve work quality.

Gadkari said providing a majority stake to a foreign partner in the joint venture is necessary to ensure that only serious and technically qualified players bid for tunnel projects.

In a lighter vein, Gadkari said that in some tunnel projects, European companies even choose Indian partners who own caterer services or beauty parlours for the construction of tunnels.

"I seriously feel that foreign partners must have 51 per cent stake, leaving 49 per cent for the Indian companies in JV for building DPR and construction of tunnels, to ensure that work is done properly," the minister said at an event here. Gadkari, who is known for his candid views, further said although the technical and financial parameters should be liberal, these should not be at the cost of quality.

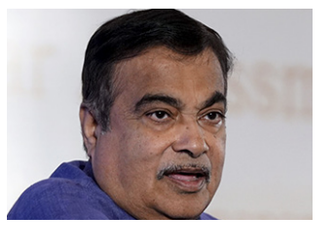


PHOTO: PTI

"I probably should not be using the word 'culprit' but I will.

"DPR makers are the 'culprits' for their lack of oversight during the process of constructing tunnels, which often leads to landslides, that are increasing in India annually," he said.

The minister said there is a need to find a permanent solution to deal with issues of frequent landslides in Uttarakhand and other Himalayan areas.

Gadkari also said, "If we can reduce our logistics cost to 9 per cent then our exports will increase by 1.5 times."

According to estimates of economic think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), the logistics cost in India ranged from 7.8 per cent to 8.9 per cent of GDP in 2021-22. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Quick commerce set to push India's gross order value to $10B

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

In a move that promises to redefine the Indian retail landscape, quick commerce companies are expected to drive their gross order value to USD 10 billion by FY26, according to a CLSA report.

This sector, marked by ultra-fast delivery and efficient last-mile operations, is rapidly disrupting the traditional food and grocery market in India, which is dominated by local small vendors controlling over 95 per cent of the USD 600 billion market.

The growth trajectory of quick commerce is underscored by key players such as Zomato's Blinkit, Zepto, and Swiggy Instamart, which are set to reach USD 10 billion in gross order value by FY26.

CLSA stated, "We expect Zomato's Blinkit, Zepto and Swiggy Instamart - the top three players - to reach USD 10 billion in gross order value by FY26 and surpass USD 78bn within a decade. Zomato's Blinkit, Zepto and Swiggy Instamart are the top-three players and hold more than 90 per cent of market share by revenue, with smaller contributions from Big Basket's BBNow and Flipkart."

Over the next decade, this figure is projected to surge past USD 78 billion. Zomato, with its high-performing Blinkit, is poised to be the major beneficiary of this growth.

India's rapid urbanisation and fragmented retail market have created a fertile ground for the quick commerce sector. The format's ability to cut out middlemen and streamline the supply chain has positioned it as a viable alternative to local kiranas, which are often constrained by limited selection and lack of pricing transparency. *—ANI*

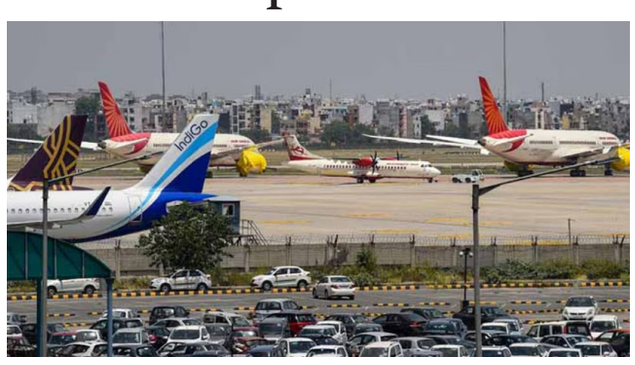
DGCA issues simplified norms for non-scheduled operators

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

Aviation watchdog DGCA has come out with new regulations to simplify the airworthiness requirements for light aircraft and non-scheduled plane operators as part of efforts to reduce compliance burden.

The new regulations will come into effect from 1 January, 2025, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said in a release on Tuesday. At present, there are two primary Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs) governing the continuing airworthiness of aircraft -- CAR-M and CAR-145.

CAR-M covers the continuing airworthiness of all aircraft types, including those used for scheduled operations, non-scheduled operations, flying training, general aviation, and private operations. CAR-145 specifies regulations for the maintenance of aircraft used in commercial operations and complex motor aircraft.



New regulations will come into effect from 1 January, 2025 *PHOTO: PTI*

These regulations are applicable uniformly across organisations irrespective of size and for maintenance processes required for commercial as well as private aircraft.

Aligned with European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the regulations seek to simplify airworthiness requirements for light aircraft and those used by operators other than licensed air carriers. Also, appropriate amendments have been made to CAR-M and CAR-145.

Government is working on ways to further improve air connectivity and is also seeking to promote seaplane operations under the regional air connectivity scheme. *—PTI*

Domestic saving to remain top net lender: RBI's Patra

MUMBAI, 3 SEPT

Reserve Bank Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra on Tuesday said domestic saving has largely financed the investment needs of the economy and will remain the top net lender in coming decades.

In a keynote address at the Financing 3.0 Summit: Preparing for Viksit Bharat organised by the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) here, the deputy governor said that recently, the net financial savings of households has almost halved from 2020-21 levels due to behavioural changes in the form of unwinding of prudential savings accumulated during the pandemic and shifting from financial assets to assets like housing.

Their physical savings have also risen in the post-pandemic years to over 12 per cent of GDP and could rise further, he said, adding they had reached 16 per cent of GDP in 2010-11.

He further said the private corporate sector has drastically reduced its net borrowings from the rest of the economy, reflecting a combination of rising internal accruals and subdued capacity creation.

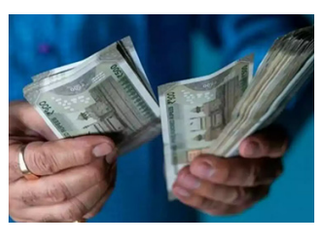


PHOTO: PTI

Looking ahead, Patra said its net borrowing requirement is likely to rise on the back of a revival in the capex cycle.

For India, domestic savings have largely financed the overall investment requirements of growth, with external financing playing a supplemental role as reflected in overall modest current account deficits.

During his address, Patra also delved into India's growth story and the fact that the country is riding on the cusp of a distinct demographic advantage. *—PTI*

MAKEMYTRIP'S REPORT

Indians taking int'l trips grows 32% annually

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

The number of Indians travelling abroad in a year twice or more has gone up 32 per cent, according to a report released on Tuesday.

Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Delhi lead the charts for international travel searches, as per the 'How India Travels Abroad' Report by travel booking platform MakeMyTrip. The report covered the period between June 2023 and May 2024.

Popular destinations such as the UAE, Thailand, and the US, top the chart of the destinations that Indians love to travelling to, with Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Bhutan leading the emerging destinations chart.

A key finding from the report suggests that international travel search volumes remain relatively steady across all seasons, with December being the most active month for international travel searches.

Interest in luxury travel is rising among Indians, with a 10 per cent growth in searches for business class flights *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

Rajesh Magow, Co-founder and Group CEO, MakeMyTrip, said, "With rising disposable incomes, greater exposure to global cultures, and the increasing ease of travel, more Indians are exploring both domestic and international destinations for leisure as well as business."

"While domestic tourism remains buoyant, as noted in our previous report, our latest findings highlight the notable changes in international travel behaviour driven by macroeconomic factors that are fuelling the surge in travel among Indians," he said.

According to the report, there has been a 70 per cent increase in the combined search volume for the top 10 emerging destinations.

Almaty and Baku have seen phenomenal growth rates of 527 per cent and 395 per cent, respectively.

Moreover, interest in luxury travel is rising among Indians, with a 10 per cent growth in searches for business class flights in the international segment. *—PTI*

CCD cafe count falls to 450 in FY24: Report

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

The number of Cafe Coffee Day (CCD) outlets declined to 450 in FY24, though the count of operational vending machines at corporate workplaces and hotels increased to 52,581.

The number of Value Express kiosks also declined marginally to 265, according to the latest annual report of Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd (CDEL), which owns the chain through its subsidiary Coffee Day Global Ltd.

Moreover, CCD's presence also declined to 141 cities in FY24, as compared to 154 cities a year before, the annual report showed. It had a presence in 158 cities in FY22.

However, there is a substantial increase in the number of operational vending machines, which has gone up to 52,581 in FY24 from 48,788 of FY23. It was at 38,810 in FY22.

PHOTO: PTI

CDEL has been facing trouble since the death of founder Chairman V G Siddhartha in July 2019. It is paring its debt through asset resolutions and has significantly scaled down.

Its net debt stood at Rs 881 crore in FY24. It was at Rs 1,524 crore in FY23, which has been substantially reduced through steps as asset monetisation. *—PTI*

PHOTO: DD NEWS

B'luru man swims in English Channel, creates record

BENGALURU, 3 SEPT

Siddhartha Agarwal, at 49 years of age, became the oldest Indian to swim across the English Channel, achieving the feat on 29 August. Siddhartha took 15 hours and six minutes to swim across the 42km waterway. The Bengaluru-based swimmer's quest to cross the Channel first began in 2018 when he swam the waterway as part of an eight-member relay team. It was the same year when Srikaanth Viswanathan, also from Bengaluru, entered the record books for becoming the oldest to swim the English Channel solo at the age of 46. "In 2017, during a casual swim in the pool, Satish Kumar (founder of Swim Life) presented me with the challenge of trying out open-water swimming, I accepted the idea," said Siddhartha. *—PTI*

Lord's to host WTC final from 11-15 June in 2024

DUBAI, 3 SEPT

The third World Test Championship (WTC) final will be played at the iconic Lord's from 11 to 15 June next year with 16 June as the reserve day, if required, announced the International Cricket Council on Tuesday. "The ICC World Test Championship Final has quickly become one of the most anticipated events in the cricketing calendar and we are pleased to announce the dates for the 2025 edition," said ICC CEO Geoff Allardice in a statement. The Lord's is hosting the WTC final for the first time as Southampton (2021) and the Oval (2023) were the venues for the two previous title matches. India featured in those two finals, but lost to New Zealand in the inaugural match and last year they were defeated by Australia. Currently, Rohit Sharma's India are sitting in pole position ahead of reigning champions Australia. *—PTI*

Ex-Czech Republic soccer boss gets prison term

PRAGUE, 3 SEPT

The former head of the Czech Football Association was convicted of fraud again on Tuesday and sentenced to 5 1/2 years in prison. Prague's Municipal Court also fined Miroslav Pelta 5 million Czech crowns ($221,000) and banned him from any executive position for five years. The court issued the verdict in a retrial of the case after it handed Pelta similar sentences in 2021 and 2023. An appeals court canceled those rulings and returned the case back to the original court. In the same case, the court also sentenced Simona Kratochvilova, a former deputy education minister, to six years in prison, banned her from working in public offices for six years, and fined her $88,000. *—AP*

India claim 1-2 in mixed air rifle at Deaf Shooting

NEW DELHI, 3 SEPT

The Indian contingent continued its medal winning spree, finishing 1-2 in 10m air rifle mixed team event of the 2nd World Deaf Shooting Championship at Hanover, Germany, on Tuesday. The duo of Mahit Sandhu and Dhanush Srikanth secured the gold medal while Natasha Joshi and Mohammed Murtaza Vania clinched the silver. Pranjali Dhumal and Abhinav Deshwal won silver in the 10 M air pistol event as India took their medal tally to 12 (three gold, six silver and three bronze) after day three of the competitions. India had won four and five medals on the first and second day of the tournament respectively. Dhanush and Mahit shot a deaf-shooting world record in qualification with a score of 628.8, while Natasha and Murtaza Vania also qualified for the gold medal match with a world record score of 622.1. *—PTI*

Pooja Jatyan in action
PHOTO: X

Indian archer Pooja misses Paralympics semis berth

Avani finishes fifth in women's 50m rifle 3 positions final

PARIS, 3 SEPT

Indian archer Pooja Jatyan slipped from a two-set lead to go down to heavyweight Wu Chunyan of China 4-6 in the women's recurve open quarterfinals of the Paris Paralympics here on Tuesday.

A winner of four Paralympics medals, including a team gold in 2016 Rio Games, the 34-year-old Chinese archer was nowhere in the picture after a disastrous opening set where she shot twice in the 7-point red ring to aggregate 23 points.

Pooja, a former World Para Championship silver medallist, had a superb start as she dropped just two points to take the first set with a five-point margin.

Gurugram-born 27-year-old archer raced to a 4-0 lead, winning a tight second set 25-24 by nailing a perfect 10 in her final arrow.

Needing just one set to make her maiden semifinals, Pooja faltered with a 7 in her final arrow of the third set as the Chinese reduced the margin to 2-4 taking the third set 28-27.

Pooja slowly started to crumble under pressure as she managed just 24 points in fourth set.

Earlier, Pooja showed promise, beating Yagmur Sengul of Turkey in straight sets to storm into quarterfinals. *—PTI*

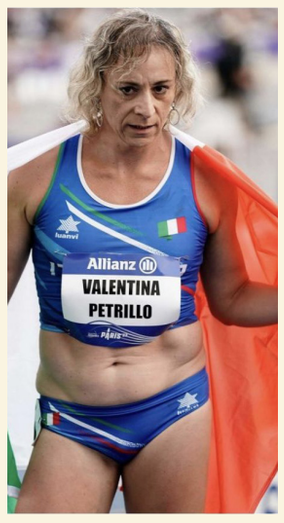
BHAGYASHRI JADHAV FINISHES FIFTH IN F34 WOMEN'S SHOT PUT

PARIS, 3 SEPT

India's Bhagyashri Jadhav finished fifth in the women's shot put (F34) at the Paralympics here on Tuesday. Jadhav, making her second appearance at the Paralympics, produced a throw of 7.28m but it was not enough for a podium finish. China's Lijuan Zou won gold with 9.14m while Poland's Lucyna Kornobys secured the silver with an effort of 8.33m. *—PTI*

ITALIAN TRANSGENDER RUNNER FAILS TO REACH 400M FINAL

PARIS, 3 SEPT



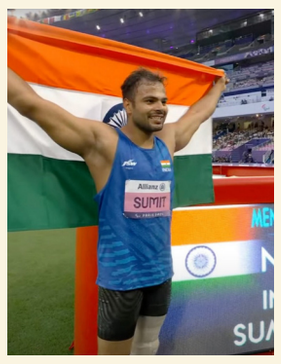
Italian transgender athlete Valentina Petrillo failed to reach the final of the women's T12 400 meters for visually impaired runners after finishing third in her semifinal at the Paralympic Games here.

The 50-year-old Petrillo ran a personal best 57.58 seconds in the second semifinal on Monday but finished behind Iran's Hajar Safarzadeh Ghahderijani and Venezuela's Alejandra Paola Perez Lopez, who both advanced to Tuesday's final. Petrillo earlier ran the fourth heat in the first round in 58.35 seconds, qualifying for the later semifinal.

Petrillo was diagnosed with Stargardt disease when she was 14, a retinal disease that causes a progressive loss of vision. *—AP*

'SWEET' SACRIFICE: SUMIT ANTIL ON DEFENDING GOLD

PARIS, 3 SEPT



Carrying a back injury for more than a year, history-making Indian javelin thrower Sumit Antil's path to Paralympic glory was paved with a 'sweet sacrifice' and several sleepless nights. Antil said after struggling with sleep and increased nervousness due to the high expectations of people around him, he was now feeling relaxed. The 26-year-old faced a tough choice in the build-up to the Paralympics -- give up his favourite sweets or put his career at risk due to rapid weight gain and a back injury that troubled him before the Asian Para Games in Hangzhou last year where he won a gold. *—PTI*

Bangladesh's players pose for photograph after winning test cricket series against Pakistan, in Rawalpindi, Pakistan on Tuesday ***PHOTO: PTI***

B'desh makes history, secures test series

RAWALPINDI, 3 SEPT

Bangladesh delivered a thoroughly dominant performance over two weeks, sweeping the Test series against Pakistan 2-0, despite a rain-affected start to the second Test.

The 10-wicket victory in the first match marked Bangladesh's maiden Test win over Pakistan. A repeat of this performance in the second Test solidified a historic achievement for the team.

This series victory is also Bangladesh's first Test series win (of two matches or more) against a team other than Zimbabwe and the West Indies, according to the ICC.

The win has boosted Bangladesh in the ICC World Test Championship standings, propelling them to No. 4 with a points percentage of 45.83, leapfrogging England.

Beginning the fifth day on 42/0, needing 143 more runs to win, Bangladesh got off to a steady start, inching towards the modest target without taking too many risks. They added another 80 runs in the morning session but lost both openers within the space of 12 runs.

Earlier in the Test, after opting to field first, Bangladesh produced another fantastic performance, bowling Pakistan out for a modest 274 runs. Despite half-centuries from captain Shan Masood and opener Saim Ayub, Mehidy Hasan Miraz's five-wicket haul, combined with three wickets from Taskin Ahmed, ensured that Pakistan's first innings total remained within reach.

Two more heroes stepped up for the visitors--24-year-old Hasan Mahmud and 21-year-old Nahid Rana--who took a combined nine wickets between them as Pakistan collapsed for just 172 runs in the second innings, setting Bangladesh a target of 185 with four sessions left in the game. *—ANI*

US OPEN

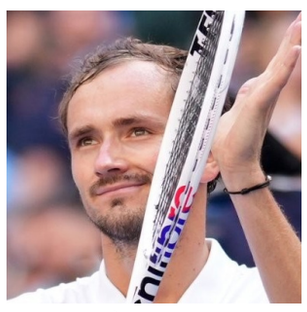
Sinner to set up QF against Medvedev

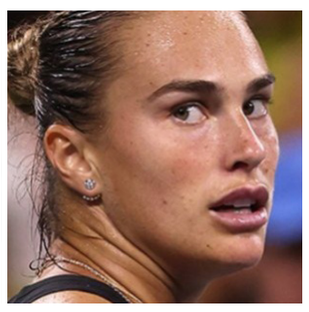
NEW YORK, 3 SEPT

Top-seeded Jannik Sinner reached the US Open quarterfinals by shaking off a slow start and coming through in the clutch at the end of tiebreakers that decided the first two sets, then pulling away to get past No. 14 Tommy Paul 7-6(3) 7-6(5) 6-1.

Two weeks removed from being cleared in a doping case stemming from two positive tests in March, Sinner moved into a showdown against 2021 champion Daniil Medvedev, the only past winner at Flushing Meadows still in the men's field.

The other quarterfinal on the top half of the men's bracket will be No. 10 Alex de Minaur vs No. 25 Jack Draper. The men's quarterfinals on Tuesday are No. 4 Alexander Zverev vs No. 12 Taylor Fritz, and No. 9 Grigor Dimitrov vs No. 20 Frances Tiafoe. *—AP*





Clockwise from left bottom: Jannik Sinner, Danil Medvedev and Aryna Sabalenka
PHOTOS: US OPEN

Haddad Maia was a semifinalist at the French Open last year but had not been past the second round at Flushing Meadows until now. Muchova enjoyed a breakthrough 2023, getting to the final in Paris and the semifinals in New York, before needing surgery on her right wrist in October, sidelining her for 10 months. *—AP*

Pegula's to face No 1 Swiatek in QF

Jessica Pegula is back in the quarterfinals at the US Open after a 6-4 6-2 victory over Diana Shnaider, her seventh trip to that round at a Grand Slam tournament.

Now comes the hard part: Pegula is 0-6 in major quarterfinals over her career — and this next one will come against No 1 Iga Swiatek.

The No. 6-seeded Pegula, an American whose parents own the NFL's Buffalo Bills and NHL's Buffalo Sabres, is on quite a run at the moment, having won 13 of her past 14 matches, all on hard courts. That included her second consecutive title in Canada and an appearance in the final at the Cincinnati Open, where she lost to No 2 Aryna Sabalenka.

Jessica Pegula
PHOTO: X

Bopanna & Sutjiadi pair enters mixed doubles SFs

NEW YORK, 3 SEPT

Veteran Indian tennis star Rohan Bopanna and his Indonesian partner Aldila Sutjiadi entered the semifinals of the US Open mixed doubles with a hard-fought win over Australian Matthew Ebden and Barbora Krejcikova of the Czech Republic here. The eighth seeded Indian-Indonesian pair registered a 7-6(4) 2-6 10-7 win over fourth seeds Ebden and Krejcikova in the quarterfinal that lasted one hour and 33 minutes on Monday night. Bopanna and Sutjiadi had earlier defeated Australian duo of John Pears and Katerina Siniakova of the Czech Republic 0-6 7-6(5) 10-7 in a second-round match. Bopanna and Sutjiadi will play American pair of Donald Young and Taylor Townsend in the semifinals. *—PTI*

17 YEARS OF CONSISTENCY

Suárez announces Int'l retirement

MONTEVIDEO, 3 SEPT

Striker Luis Suárez will play his last game for Uruguay on Friday. Suárez was emotional as he announced he was ending a 17-year international career after the World Cup qualifier against Paraguay at Centenario Stadium.

"It hurts to say it, but Friday will be my last match with my country's national team," Suárez said late Monday, unable to hold back tears at a press conference.

"I am retiring because I want to step aside. I am 37 years old, there are a lot of talented players, and I know it would be difficult to get to the next World Cup. "It is comforting to know I can retire on my terms and not have to retire due to injuries, or to not being called up. I want to say goodbye here, with my people. This is the ideal moment."

Suárez debuted in 2007 and is Uruguay's all-time leading scorer with 69 goals in 142 matches. He played in four World Cups and five Copa America. He helped to lead the team to the title at the 2011 Copa, where he scored twice in the semifinals and the match-winner in the final and was named player of the tournament.

In the 2010 World Cup quarter-finals, Suárez prevented Ghana from scoring an extra-time winner with his hand on the goal line and was red-carded. Ghana missed the resulting penalty kick, Uruguay won a penalty shootout and reached the semifinals for the first time in 40 years.

It was the third of four times in his career he bit a player. FIFA banned Suarez for nine games, the longest ban in World Cup history, and he missed the rest of the tournament and the 2015 Copa America. *—AP*

142 APPEARANCES | 69 GOALS | 39 ASSISTS

$6.5B of int'l spending in transfer window: FIFA

ZURICH, 3 SEPT

Spending on transfer fees in international men's player deals cooled off during the mid-year trading period, according to International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) research published on Tuesday.

FIFA said clubs committed to spend USD 6.46 billion on buying players in cross-border deals during the June-to-September transfer window — down from USD 7.43 billion in the same period a year ago.

The average transfer fees paid by clubs in Europe, by far the richest market, was USD 3.13 million compared to USD 3.8 million a year ago.

The biggest transfer fees in cross-border deals were Julián Alvarez's move from Manchester City to Atletico Madrid, reported to be about 75 million euros (USD 83 million) and Leny Yoro from Lille to Manchester United for a reported 62 million euros (USD 69 million).

Deals in the top-10 biggest transfer fees not counting toward the FIFA figures include Dominic Solanke from Bournemouth to Tottenham, Pedro Neto from Wolves to Chelsea and Teun Koopmeiners from Atalanta to Juventus.

Clubs from Argentina received about $130 million more than they spent, and Brazilian clubs made a collective profit of USD 98 million on international deals, FIFA said. *—AP*